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THE HISTORY OF THE

EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

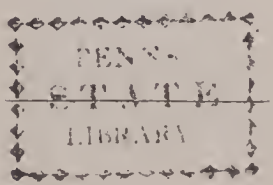
BY SAVARY,

DUKE OF ROVIGO.

VOL. III.

PARTS V. AND VI.

SECOND EDITION.



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MEMOIRS

OF

THE DUKE OF ROVIGO.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

Particulars respecting the banishment of Madame de Chevreuse—Threat of revising the judgment of Marshal d'Ancre—Madame de Staël—Motives for her disgrace—Stratagem resorted to by her—Madame Recamier—Her reasons for living in the country—Secret motives she had for retiring to Switzerland—M. de Duras—M. de La Salle—Literary men—M. Fouché's system of operations.

I HAVE now to present an account of the motives which gave occasion for the banishment of Madame de Chevreuse, and the other ladies already mentioned.

Madame de Chevreuse was one of the first on the list sent from Paris to the Emperor, when he was yet at the head of his army, after the battle of Austerlitz. She would, therefore, have been banished as well as every other person on the list, had it not been for the protection of some friends of her family.

M. de Talleyrand was at Vienna, and lived on intimate terms with Madame de Luynes, Madame de Chevreuse's step-mother, who availed herself of his services to ward off

the blow which threatened her step-daughter. M. de Talleyrand took advantage of the regard felt by the Emperor for the late Duke de Luynes, who had died a senator, and succeeded in representing all the levities of Madame de Chevreuse as mere acts of giddiness. He not only obtained the erasure of her name from the list submitted by the police, but he also caused her to be appointed a lady of the Empress' household.

He was probably compelled to frighten her into an acceptance of the appointment; but this was a private matter between them; and it was quite indifferent to the Emperor whether or not Madame de Chevreuse should belong to his household. This, however, was far from being the case with M. de Talleyrand, who considered that lady's appointment as the only means of preserving her from the annoyance she might receive from the police: and in order to conquer her reluctance, he no doubt concerted with Madame de Luynes to frighten her, by saying that it was the Emperor's desire she should be a lady of the household, at the same time giving the Emperor to understand that Madame de Luynes' family were desirous of the appointment. An improper use was often made of his name in this manner. Madame de Chevreuse resigned herself to the duty forced upon her. But she always came with evident reluctance to a circle where she received no more than common attentions. She pretended not to notice this apparent slight, and always assumed the airs of a rude and often of an ill-bred woman at a court where she had only been admitted in consequence of the entreaties of her own friends. She was tolerated; but no one saw her with pleasure.

At the period of the arrival in France of the Queen of Spain, the Emperor named from Bayonne some ladies of his household, to keep that princess company, as she would naturally be at a loss for society at Compiegne. Madame de Chevreuse, who was then at an estate near Paris, was one of

the ladies selected. Every consideration had been attended to in such a choice, both as to what might be agreeable to the Queen of Spain, and flattering to the pride of Madame de Chevreuse. Madame de Larochefoucault, one of the ladies of honour, communicated to the latter the appointment just given to her, intimating at the same time the day on which the Queen was expected to arrive at Compiegne, where she was requested to be in attendance.

Nothing could be more unexpected than the manner in which this young lady received the message. She briefly replied, that she would not go, not having been brought up to act the part of a jailer. Every one blamed the manner of her refusal; but her conduct called for some severer mark of disapprobation. It was felt necessary to report it to the Emperor, who recalled the appointment of Madame de Chevreuse, and ordered her away to the distance of forty leagues from Paris.

I was solicited during three years to procure her recall, and was really at a loss to account for so much meanness displayed for the attainment of that object, after so insolent a conduct on her part.

The Emperor was sometimes heard to say, when speaking of that family, "Let them beware. I will show them the distinction I draw between a genealogy of the sword and a genealogy of servants. If they excite my anger, I will revoke the act of confiscation of the property of Marshal d'Ancre, who was shamefully assassinated: and should his memory be reinstated, heirs will not be wanting to claim his spoils from the family of Luynes, whose wealth was wholly derived from that odious deed. *

Madame de Staël had not been banished; but she was

* Marshal d'Ancre was killed in 1617 on the drawbridge of the Louvre by l'Hopital de Vitry; and his wife was beheaded and burnt as a sorceress. The house of Luynes was enriched by his property.

ordered to a distance from the capital, in consequence of an intrigue in which some rivals had involved her. A woman of so much celebrity is often exposed to the consequences of letters pouring in upon her.

Such was her situation when I entered the ministry. She has no doubt been told that the Emperor had of his own accord ordered her banishment; but this was by no means the case. I know in what manner the circumstance originated, and can safely assert that when he forced her from her attachment to the world, and ordered her to retire into the country, he only yielded to the repeated entreaties, and the unfavourable reports made to him; for, it must be acknowledged, that he paid far too much deference to her notions of self-consequence and to her work upon Germany. Attempts were at first made to render her more circumspect; but all in vain. She could neither be silenced nor prevented from meddling in and finding fault with every thing. She assumed the right to advise, foresee, and controul, in matters in which the Emperor felt himself fully qualified to act upon his own judgment. He grew tired of receiving letters direct from Madame de Staël, and of finding the same subjects discussed in those which she wrote to her friends, who regularly sent them for the Emperor's perusal; and to get rid of the annoyance, he sent her to distribute her advice at a distance from him.

She soon regretted the capital, and often wrote to me to obtain her recall, under a variety of pretexts. She at last feigned the determination of going to America, but was betrayed by one of her friends, to whom she had divulged her real plan. I was aware that it was first of all her intention to come to Paris; and that with respect to the voyage to America, she would afterwards consider of it; that is to say, she would take time to make up her mind on the subject.

Personally speaking, I was rather disposed to yield to her request than to refuse it. I had in fact no motive for op-

posing it, because it must have been a desirable object for Madame de Staël to be on good terms with the minister of police. Such an arrangement therefore might have been suitable to both; but in order to acquire her good opinion, which I was by no means certain of obtaining, I should have begun by making myself many enemies amongst her immediate friends, whose hostility I was not at all disposed to excite. She could not have gained any thing, and I must have lost by the bargain. I was afraid to run the risk of improving her situation; and although I pitied her for having created in our men of wit a feeling of jealousy towards each other, my mind was made up in respect to her by the passport she had asked for America; and I took care not to be the dupe of her cunning; or, in other words, that she should not place me under the necessity of recurring to measures which were repugnant to my feelings.

A great outcry has also been raised against the banishment of Madame Recamier. Nothing in fact is more common than to speak right or wrong upon every subject. The unsuccessful speculations of the house of Recamier, which compelled Madame Recamier to retire to a country life, were well known to every one; nothing on her part could be more honourable; but she had no right to pass herself off for the victim of tyranny, and to write such nonsense to every one. It would have been much more correct to tell them at once that the fortune of the house had been lost by bad speculations, than to accuse the Emperor as the author of that loss. Madame Recamier had a motive for leading a provincial life; and she told her admirers, who pressed her returning to Paris, that it did not rest with her to do so, thereby inducing the inference that she was prevented by the Emperor, although she was farthest from his thoughts. He accordingly gave orders, that if she returned, she should no longer be allowed to collect about her person that circle of discontented people, amongst whom she affected to give vent to her grief. I owe

it to candour to acknowledge, that I wrote to her to desire, among other things, that she should dismiss from her mind all thoughts of coming to Paris for the present. She had not contemplated it; but still she was pleased at the order of banishment, which afforded her a ready pretext for replying to the solicitations of a crowd of friends, with whom she was glad of the excuse. I was also influenced by another motive, one which personally interested herself. I wished to spare her from the unpleasant consequences which *her contemplated journey to Switzerland* would have necessarily occasioned. If she should read this work she will know what I mean; and should I ever have the satisfaction of paying my respects to her, with every apology on my part for the freedom, I shall let her know how correctly I was informed of every thing that related to her; and she will then think herself beholden to me for inducing her to remain at Lyons. That my information was correct is sufficiently proved by my having seen, in the apartments of a German prince,* the splendid painting which M. Gerard has made of that elegant lady, who substituted her portrait in lieu of the original, in the palace of the above prince.

Madame Recamier's animosity against the Emperor may be said, however, to date from the earliest days of the consulate. The following account will prove how groundless were its motives.

During Lucien's embassy to the Spanish court, he had occasion to intrust his dispatches for Paris to one of his personal friends who had accompanied him to Spain. The latter, on his way through Dax, stopped at the residence of M. Méchin, the prefect of the department of the Landes; and amongst other communications which the prefect intrusted to him for the First Consul, respecting the situation of his department, he acquainted him with the unceasing endeavours

* Prince Augustus, son of Prince Ferdinand, the brother of Frederick the Great.

he had fruitlessly made for the purpose of discovering the origin of a publication replete with the grossest insults, not only against the government, but also against the person of the First Consul, and the several members of his family. This publication found its way regularly into the department, and was mysteriously conveyed to the houses of several individuals. M. Méchin handed seven numbers of it to this express, who immediately took his departure for Bordeaux. The commissary of police in that city was in the same dilemma as M. Méchin; complained of the same publication, and delivered four additional numbers of it to the express, who arrived at the residence of the First Consul in Paris with eleven of those numbers, which were forthwith transmitted to M. Fouché, the then minister of police. This minister soon ascertained, through the inquiries which he set on foot, that the publication was edited in Paris by an Abbé Guyot, who availed himself of the friendship subsisting between him and M. Bernard, the father of Madame Recamier, who was one of the directors of the post-office, to transmit the publication to all those places with which he kept up an official intercourse, from whence it was thrown into general circulation.

The discovery gave rise to M. Bernard's arrest; and he was soon afterwards brought to the ministry of police, and questioned respecting the fact. This occurrence took place on the very day of Madame Recamier's calling at the ministry of police to inquire into the cause of her father's arrest, when she made protestations of his innocence, and asked permission to have an interview with him, which was immediately granted to her. She saw him at the hotel of the ministry of police, obtained the information she desired, which immediately silenced her complaints. She became alarmed at the probable consequences of the discovery; and, as the only means of parrying the blow, proposed the surrender of the office held

by her father, who tendered his resignation, which was instantly accepted.

The First Consul heard no more of the matter, and ordered M. Bernard to be set at liberty; but Madame Recamier was insensible to this act of benevolence, and retained all her asperity, which she instilled into the minds of her numerous admirers.

No other females but the three above named had been sent into banishment: the men who suffered from it consisted of a very few individuals, who were thereby compelled to renounce their usual habits of life; for with respect to those who had at all times lived upon their estates, they assuredly felt no inconvenience from the measure.

M. de Duras was almost the only individual who had, in the first instance, been banished to some distance. By degrees, however, he had taken up his residence so near Paris, that he frequently came there without receiving the smallest molestation. Some public notice was taken of these visits, though not until he had returned to the country, and merely to prevent their too frequent repetition. No indication was ever given of his having been seen until he had gone back to the department in which he resided.

M. de La Salle had the character of being a turbulent man, capable of embarking in any daring enterprise. His intentions were sounded whilst he resided in Burgundy, where the opinion entertained of him was fully borne out by his conduct; for he took a decided part even before the events of the month of April, 1814, had occurred.

M. de Montrond, likewise, had been banished to Antwerp. I have myself had occasion to inform him of the name of the individual to whom he was indebted for his disgrace: the Emperor did no more than give his sanction to the measure proposed to him.

I have now given a faithful account of the banishments in

force in July, 1810, against which such an outcry has been raised: this clamour would excite no other feeling than that of contempt, had it not occasioned heavy misfortunes, and been as it were the cause of the daily inroads made upon the consideration and respect due to the then existing government.

It may not be inaptly remarked in this place, that in the zenith of the Emperor's power, which was immediately after his marriage, he might have given an unbounded loose to the pretended spirit of despotism, the thirst for arbitrary measures which have been ascribed to him. Nevertheless, it was at this period that he dispensed graces and favours in the greatest profusion. I could perceive that an impression had been conveyed to literary men that he considered them as his enemies; and I began from that moment to entertain a settled opinion with respect to the course resorted to for the purpose of alienating many of them from his interests.

As he had particularly enjoined me to treat them with every consideration, I sought an opportunity, which soon presented itself, of cultivating their acquaintance. A variety of poetical effusions had been addressed to the Emperor on the occasion of his marriage; and he desired me to give him every information, not, as may well be supposed, in respect to the productions, but concerning the authors: for although I was not insensible to the effect produced by reading them, or hearing them recited, it was far above my capacity to discuss their respective merits.

I had all those literary productions collected, and ordered that those which had obtained most approbation should be pointed out to me, and with them, all the compositions published under similar circumstances from the time of Louis XIV., and considered worthy of being handed down to us: the only one that could be pointed out of the latter class was an ode entitled *La Nymphe de la Seine*; a production of Racine in his younger days, on the occasion of the marriage

of the Dauphiness. It is less copious, and in my opinion less elegant, than the greater part of those which the Emperor's marriage had inspired.

An opportunity was thus afforded me, whilst executing the Emperor's orders, of giving him an account of each author, and of letting him know that the poetical effusions which filled the columns of the newspapers had been levied from those authors by my predecessor's commands. The Emperor became indignant upon hearing this. "I had been told so," was his reply to me; "but I was unwilling to credit it: thus he proceeded in every thing; and I am consequently accused of being my own panegyrist." He was greatly hurt at such conduct: he directed that I should submit to him a scale of the distribution of a hundred thousand francs, which he was desirous of awarding to the several persons who had displayed their talents on the present occasion; adding, that it was doing him a very unworthy service not to recompense authors whose labours had been rendered compulsory. Had he, in fact, lost sight of their claims, they would never have heard of the gratuities I delivered to them in his name; and would have been justified in complaining of him, though he could in reality have been arraigned with as little justice for forgetting them, as he had been for the orders they had received.

It thereby came to my knowledge that the system of ordering poetical effusions was another of the means resorted to by the police to acquire wealth. When, however, this system has been so usefully applied to private purposes, there should be an end to that unblushing impudence of publishing to the world, that the man whose liberalities were a source of personal wealth to individuals, and who received a profusion of praises wholly unsolicited, was a tyrant doomed to destruction. The distribution of the above-mentioned sum to the several persons for whom it was destined, afforded me an opportunity of seeing them all in succession; I never

omitted to peruse, immediately after the visit of each author, the piece of poetry he had composed, my curiosity being then awakened respecting him; and I seldom failed to discover something of the author's character by a comparison of his physiognomy with a production which could only have emanated from the dictates of his heart.

CHAPTER II.

M. Esmenard—The academicians—M. de Chateaubriand—M. Etienne—M. Jay—M. Michaud—M. Tissot—Service rendered to him by the Emperor—In what manner M. Tissot testified his gratitude—He succeeds Delille.

On this occasion I first became intimately acquainted with M. Esmenard: I had read his poem on navigation, and was at a loss to account for the author of so splendid a production having laid himself open to the calumnies heaped upon him. When he became attached to me, I undertook to relieve him in his difficulties: the means of being generous had been amply afforded me by the fortune which I had received from the Emperor, as well as by the advantages of the post I occupied. I afforded assistance to M. Esmenard; and by disengaging his mind from the troubles which oppressed it, I found in him a man wholly devoted to me, and of a distinguished talent, which he unreservedly and at all times employed in my service. He never swerved from his attachment to myself, felt a sincere affection for the Emperor, and was never apprehensive of making the truth known to me. I have more than once had to lament the void created by his death. Through him I became acquainted with literary men, both in what concerned them personally, and in respect to their talents. I was prepared for his speaking with great asperity of others, owing to the number of his enemies; my

good opinion of him was therefore greatly enhanced by noticing his reserved language concerning those who were remorseless in their rage against him. I am only alluding to M. Esmenard with reference to our mutual intercourse. In other respects this highly-talented man caused me much uneasiness; for the jealousy which he inspired raised all the votaries of Parnassus against his patron.

According as I became acquainted with all our academicians, I found that this learned society was ruled by a party who watched every vacancy amongst its members in order to procure the appointment of some of their friends, and that however great might be a claim on the score of merit, beyond their own circle it was in vain to hope for admission.

It occurred to me to have some of my friends placed amongst the competitors, not through any feeling of self-love, but in order to secure the means of repelling any attacks that might be directed from that quarter; for I anticipated the frequency, and especially the danger of such attacks, considering that any branch of literature I might chance to neglect would therefore become a powerful weapon of offence against the minister of police. I felt, moreover, alarmed at the quantity of books brought to me every week; and if I had not employed a score of people to peruse and notice any thing reprehensible in them, within as short a period as a spirit of malevolence could have gleaned extracts from the works, and adapted them to its own wicked purposes, my whole time would have been taken up in counteracting the intrigues which would have been set on foot for the express purpose of defeating my measures.

I therefore formed the plan of procuring M. Esmenard's admission into the Academy; and exerted myself with so much success, that I obtained for him that majority of votes, without which he would have been infallibly thrown out.

I was assisted in my views by placemen who belonged to the class of the belles-lettres.

I became emboldened by this small triumph; and M. Chénier having died soon afterwards, I endeavoured to procure M. de Chateaubriand's admission: I succeeded in securing his appointment; and had I rendered no other service to science, I should consider this as a signal one. His reception, however, was attended with difficulties which he could not be prevailed upon to surmount: he may have felt himself justly offended at a measure to which the academic body thought proper to subject him.

Ministry of Police.
MM. Etienne, Jay, Tissot, Michaud.

I felt anxious for the society of a limited circle of men equally commendable for their talents and for their enlightened knowledge. I was personally acquainted with M. Etienne, whom I had met at the camp, and was aware of the Emperor's high esteem for him; but M. Etienne felt an invincible reluctance to coming in contact with the minister of general police. By the interference of M. Arnault, a member of the Institute, and a man worthy of every regard, I succeeded on the death of M. Esmenard, though not till then, in persuading M. Etienne to accept of the vacant division, which had not the slightest connexion with the rest of the ministry. The Emperor approved of this choice; and M. Etienne's sound judgment, and the correctness of his deportment, amply justified it to my mind. I might cite many noble traits in the character of this individual, whose brilliancy of talent was only equalled by the probity of his heart.

M. Jay was only known to me by his reputation of being a man of great wit and learning. After accompanying to Italy the Duke of Otranto, who had confided the classical education of his children to his care, he quitted that minister on his embarkation at Leghorn for the United States of America, and had just returned to Paris. M. Jay felt apprehensive of the prejudices with which he supposed me to be

tainted against all those who had belonged to the Duke of Otranto. I did not leave him long in a state of uncertainty, but sent for him; and was so well satisfied with his appearance, his political sentiments, which he made no attempt to disguise, and his moderation of language, that I resolved to attach him to my department in any manner most agreeable to his own feelings. I intrusted him with the task of translating and analysing the English publications, with which the ministry of police was abundantly supplied through the medium of the police commissaries at Boulogne. M. Jay accompanied his reports to me upon those productions, with remarks on their political tendency. His labours were regularly transmitted to the Emperor, who has often desired me to signify to the author his approbation of them. He ordered me some time afterwards to place the *Journal de Paris* under his special management.

M. Michaud had been named to me in the most flattering terms: he was at that time engaged on his splendid work on the subject of the crusades. I took every opportunity of drawing him to my hotel; and had as much reason to be satisfied with his attachment, as others had to appreciate his talents: he was sincerely devoted to the imperial government. The Emperor, who was a better judge than I was of the character and dispositions of men in general, and who valued his sentiments no less than his talents, ordered me to place him on the list of gratifications, at the time of the distribution of shares in the *Gazette de France*. The Emperor never afterwards forgot him in any of the gratuities which he bestowed upon literary men. I have never had reason to repent of my intercourse with M. Michaud, who, on his part, never had occasion to complain of my conduct towards him: this is an act of justice which I do not apprehend he would withhold from me.

I had heard of M. Tissot as the author of several literary productions. I also knew that he was indebted to the Empe-

ror for having escaped falling a victim to the base resentment of his implacable enemies, who had exerted their utmost endeavours to include him amongst those who suffered transportation after the affair of the 3rd Nivose. Moved by the representations of MM. Monge, Bertholet, and Cambacérès, and of Madame Bonaparte, who had long been acquainted with him, the First Consul himself struck his name out of the list; but as he was still urged to remove him at least to a distance from Paris, he directed the strictest inquiry to be instituted into M. Tissot's conduct during the period of the revolution; and from the circumstance that no charge was found against him, General Bonaparte had occasion to discover how great was the animosity of private feelings on the occasion, and he accordingly restored him to his family. Subsequently to that period, two men, whose minds were worked upon by party-spirit, came to confide to him the intention they had formed of attempting the First Consul's life: their absolute indifference to life might secure the success of their criminal attempt; they renounced it on M. Tissot's remonstrating with them. This meritorious action had remained buried for many years in profound oblivion: chance made me acquainted with the fact, which I hastened to communicate to the Emperor; he was affected at the recital, and then related to me how he had saved M. Tissot from the most imminent danger, at a moment when every one sought to gratify private revenge, under favour of the opportunity presented by the horrible attempt of the 3rd Nivose.

I disguised this circumstance from M. Tissot, as I was indeed bound to do, and he will remain in ignorance of it until he reads this work; but it gave me the desire of becoming personally acquainted with him. He was then leading a retired life, and only intent upon literary pursuits, and upon the duties of a situation in the excise department: the director of which, M. François de Nantes, one of the wittiest men in France, entertained a particular regard for him. We had a

frank and open interview together. I had not at that time in my department any place worthy his acceptance, and merely asked him if he would undertake to point out to my notice those works in literature and arts which were entitled to public attention, as well as every rising genius who was deserving of encouragement; I considered it a matter of the highest importance and a personal satisfaction to contribute to the success of the objects of his choice. M. Tissot consented to take upon himself this description of labour, and performed it with alacrity and kindness. Many persons were unconsciously indebted to him for the honourable rewards bestowed upon them by the Emperor. He particularly befriended young men, and was ardent in promoting their interests. At a later period, the Emperor directed me to confide the direction of the *Gazette de France* to M. Tissot's management.

On the death of Abbé Delille, who had selected him for his substitute in the professorship of Latin poetry, the Emperor's mind was immediately directed to M. Tissot; and he felt gratified at his being proposed to him by the votes of the College of France and of the Institute, as Abbé Delille's successor. M. Tissot was accordingly vested with the title of professor.

The Emperor always set a high value on the rectitude and sound judgment of that writer; and I recollect his once sending for him during the period of the hundred days.

By the aid of this little areopagus, I found myself in a condition to paralyse the effects of prejudices, and the spirit of malevolence, which ascribed to me hostile intentions and sentiments utterly foreign to my thoughts. Since I considered, on the contrary, from my first entrance into the ministry, that in order to be really useful to the Emperor, I was bound to keep within the limits of moderation, and to be proof against the workings of personal animosity. I was particularly desirous of propitiating literary men, by exalting their success and their dignified attitude in a literary and a political

point of view. Those truly valuable men, whose attachment I had courted, gave me the most effectual support by the kindness and zeal they evinced in distinguishing every species of talent. With respect to the influence I was supposed to exercise over those writers, every one who has the publications of that period to refer to can readily satisfy himself that they never refrained from professing openly at that time certain principles which on many occasions since the restoration would have brought them before the correctional police. The government, however, was secure in its own strength; its theory was of a truly national character; all minds and all parties were united in its support. Any person who might have attempted to sow the seeds of discord would have been considered as a madman: however great the freedom with which any opinion might be expressed, it gave us no uneasiness. I challenge those writers to point out a single instance of my having invited or authorised them to resort to subterfuge or deception in order to turn the public mind into any particular channel. Feeling strong in my own innocence, I am also fully convinced that they never would have consented to any degrading act of subserviency, so great was their innate spirit of independence; and the Emperor has perhaps never heard on certain subjects such severe truths as I occasionally collected from their conversations, which were carried on with perhaps much less restraint than any where else in Paris, though not one of them ever had cause to apprehend any evil consequences from it. The freedom of their discourse was even reported to the Emperor by persons whose officious zeal is always on the alert when an injury is to be inflicted.

I was beginning to acquire a thorough knowledge of duties which I was quite ignorant of a few months before; and was now much less apprehensive of the collision into which I was forced with every species of human imperfections.

CHAPTER III.

Ball of the imperial guard—Fête given by Prince Schwartzenberg—The ball-room on fire—The Emperor—Impression created by that accident—Composition of the cabinet—Various intrigues—M. Ferrand—The chamberlain—Private societies; false reports—How defeated.

THE frightful accident of the fire in the ball-room of Prince Schwartzenberg's hotel occurred in the month of July, or August, 1810.

The Prince gave a grand ball on the occasion of the Emperor's marriage with the daughter of his sovereign. I believe that the ball given on the same occasion by the imperial guard did not take place till some time afterwards. The whole city of Paris was present at the latter fête, which was given at the military school, without the occurrence of the slightest accident. It happened otherwise, however, at the Austrian ambassador's hotel.

A spacious ball-room had been erected, of very slight framework, near the principal suite of apartments, and protected by a cloth awning richly covered over. The architect entrusted with the construction had confined himself principally to a display of elegance and taste. This spacious and splendidly decorated ball-room was lighted up by an immense number of lustres suspended from the ceiling; and the entrance to it was through a gallery decorated in the same tasteful manner.

The ball-room and its approaches were soon filled with the company invited; the Emperor and Empress, the Queen of Westphalia, the Vice-Queen of Italy, had arrived; and the pleasures of the dance were at their height, when a wax candle, which was accidently bent, set fire to one of the garlands of artificial flowers which decorated the walls of the gallery. The fire, owing to the current of air, spread with

the rapidity of lightning, and soon reached the ball-room, which was instantly in a blaze.

The Emperor was in the centre of the room. He was waiting for the assistance of the firemen, and was much displeased at their delay. As the danger increased every moment, he led the Empress back to the Tuileries, and returned to see what was going forward in Prince Schwartzenberg's hotel, being apprehensive that this dreadful accident would be attended with severe misfortunes. He had no sooner retired with the Empress when a panic spread in all directions: the passages were encumbered with people flying from the scene, and endeavouring to effect their escape.

Prince Kourakin, the Russian ambassador, fell down the few steps leading from the ball-room into the garden, which had escaped his notice, and he was trampled upon by the crowd. As he was unable to rise immediately from the ground, the flames caught him in that position, and did him so serious an injury as to place his life for a long time in imminent danger.

The main boards of this light structure were consumed in an instant, and its spacious entrance-door fell, with all the lustres, upon those who had not yet been able to effect their escape. The firemen gave no proof of activity on the occasion. It must be admitted that under no circumstances could they have saved the ball-room; but had they been fully prepared to act, they might have so far stopped the progress of the flames as to afford every one time to retire.

The very engines were without water, and upwards of half an hour elapsed before they were able to play upon the fire. The Emperor was present, and did not withdraw until it was completely extinguished. He shared in the affliction of Prince Schwartzenberg, to whom he addressed the most consoling expressions. He sent for the prefect of the police, to whom he expressed his displeasure in the strongest terms, and I think he formed on that day the determination of dis-

placing him as soon as he should find a person competent to assume the duties of the office. It required a man fully competent to enter into all the details which are connected with it; and few persons are calculated to go effectually through such a task. As soon as the fire was got under, the Emperor returned to St. Cloud, and sent me orders to wait upon him at an early hour the next morning with an account of the consequences of the accident. It was not until daylight that the body of Princess Schwartzenberg, the lady of the ambassador's elder brother, was discovered under the remains of the burnt timber of the ball-room. She had succeeded in extricating herself, but had returned in search of her children, not having seen them effect their escape. She had hardly got under the blazing roof when the woodwork gave way, and so crushed and consumed her, that she was only distinguished by some remains of the jewels she had worn at the fête.

The Countess de la Leyen died of her wounds a few days afterwards, as well as the wife of the Russian consul-general, and Madame Touzard, the wife of a general officer of artillery. Several others were seriously wounded, and experienced prolonged sufferings from the effects of that dreadful accident, which was for a long time the exclusive topic of conversation in France. A very singular correspondence came at that period into my hands. It pointed out the accident which had occurred on the marriage of the dauphiness, the late Queen of France. Every one spoke of the strong analogy between the two accidents; and even went so far as to conjecture the occurrence of events, which would have appeared ridiculous to the most senseless understanding, and which have nevertheless been in a great measure verified. It is no exaggeration to assert that the idea was generally prevalent of there being an evil destiny inseparable from our alliances with Austria. That opinion was gaining ground, and I had to combat many difficulties before I could succeed in paralysing its unpleasant effects.

I have already related, that after making a division in the system of vigilance which I was exercising over Paris, I discovered nothing of sufficient consequence to create alarm, and began to consider the capital under another aspect. I will explain my meaning.

I merely beheld the mischief which had been done; and whilst seeking for the origin of it, other mischief was springing up. I was already enabled to discover that the Emperor's facility of access furnished malicious people many opportunities of reporting stories to him as proceeding from such and such a class of society, or from speculating men, who, in order to favour their operations, were endeavouring to depress the funds. I had remarked that, generally speaking, those stories grew out of the imaginations of some crazy or idle people, who abused the free access they had to the sovereign to profess a zeal for his service, and to favour at the same time certain views of private ambition. The exclusive confidence of the Emperor appeared to be a bone of contention between a few individuals, who watched every opportunity of forcing their friends and dependents into places of trust about his person, in order to surround him with an atmosphere wholly devoted to their interests. I was a witness to the impudence with which the most knavish intrigues were carried on for the purpose of introducing dependents into every branch of the Emperor's household. After attempting to grasp at the nominations to the ranks of grand-marshal, grand-equerry, and grand-chamberlain, it was at last attempted to secure the appointments to the Emperor's closet.

The following was the organization of that closet. What was specially called the private closet had only one secretary, called the secretary *of the portfolio*, a situation held by M. de Menneval. This arrangement continued until his return from Russia, when the state of his health compelled the Emperor to appoint a person to succeed him, after placing him, however, near the person of the Empress in the capacity

of her private secretary, on his establishing the regency, and with instructions to correspond daily with him during his absence from the capital.

M. Fain, the keeper of the records, occupied a separate apartment with the archives, where the papers of the private closet were never deposited until the complete disposal of the business to which they related. He never entered the Emperor's closet unless summoned, and for no longer time than the Emperor required his presence.

Messrs. Mounier and Desponthons, secretaries of the closet, occupied in common a separate office. The former had the charge of translating foreign newspapers; and the translators selected to assist him were persons of his own choice. He received for this duty fifty thousand francs a year; notwithstanding which I regularly sent to the Emperor the English newspapers ready translated, in consequence of their coming first into my own hands. M. Desponthons was entrusted with the business connected with fortifications, and had therefore less duties to perform. To M. Dalbe was assigned the duty connected with maps and charts; and he also occupied a separate apartment with two topographical engineers. This division of labour effectually closed the doors of the private closet and of the respective offices against any intrigue: its efforts were therefore directed towards the Empress; and an attempt was made in that quarter to force its agents into responsible places. Its first trial was that of endeavouring to raise M. de Narbonne to the situation of grand-master of the household; but although the Emperor was well pleased with M. de Narbonne, he nevertheless refused his consent to that appointment, to which the Empress was still more averse than himself. M. de S . . . strained every nerve to procure the place of private secretary to the Empress, in the first instance, for a M. de Gillevoisin, his dependent, and afterwards for M. Ferrand, who acquired such celebrity in 1814, by the different situations he held under the royal government. But

the Emperor had his secret motives for turning a deaf ear to all those hints. He would only place near the Empress a person of unimpeachable fidelity; and was accordingly under the necessity, at a later period, of parting with M. de Menneval, who was, notwithstanding, so useful to his service.

I was one of the first to discover what would be the consequence of this unfortunate medley, created by the readiness with which any expression thrown out against a person whom it was endeavoured to ruin, was made to circulate in such a manner as to reach the Emperor's ears.

I had the courage to open my mind very freely to the Emperor on this subject, both with respect to what I was a witness to, and what was reported to me. I never concealed any thing from his knowledge; and experience has too well proved how unworthy of his esteem and affection were those men who contended for his favours, and considered as the infliction of a personal injury every mark of benevolence which he showed to his most faithful adherents.

The Emperor, who has so long been represented as of a gloomy and mistrustful character, was, on the contrary, kind even to a fault, and reposed unbounded confidence in those who had never proved unfaithful to him. His disposition rather inclined him to think well of others, than to suspect them, until, to use his own expression, he had actually caught *the hand dipping in the bag*. Nothing short of a deep-laid scheme could succeed in shaking his good opinion of any one. The only reproach to which he appeared to me to have given some cause on this point, was, that when he discovered any deception attempted to be practised upon him, he never expressed, in sufficiently strong terms, his displeasure to those calumniators, who were encouraged by this impunity to renew their evil designs.

He would have spared himself much trouble and vexation had he inflicted a signal punishment for the first calumny reported to him.

I have said that it was in his nature to confide in the fidelity of all those who were about his person. I will mention an instance in proof of this assertion, which I select out of a multitude of cases I might easily bring forward.

I accompanied him, as his aide-de-camp, to a review, which he held of the 7th regiment of hussars at Vienna, after the battle of Wagram. He was making appointments to the vacant ranks, and distributing rewards amongst the officers and soldiers who had been wounded during the campaign. The colonel of the 4th regiment urged him to break an officer who was not present at the review, and lived in Vienna, in the most degrading state of debauchery, from which it was found impossible to withdraw him, even when his duty should have called him to the field of honour, on the occasion of the battle of Wagram.

The Emperor not only broke him on the spot, but ordered that he should be made an example of; and told the Prince of Neufchatel, who took note of it accordingly, that he was to procure the arrest of that officer, and bring him before a council of war. Previously to leaving the ground, the Emperor filled up his place by one of the lieutenants of the regiment. It was the practice to submit for the Emperor's signature, in the afternoon of the day on which he had passed any corps in review, the final decree for the several appointments he had made. The Prince of Neufchatel served him with a zeal which greatly contributed to secure him the affection of the soldiers. They were satisfied that the Emperor no sooner issued an order, in which their interests were concerned, than the Prince immediately carried it into effect.

When he had given his signature to any official document, it was immediately sent from his closet to the office of the secretary of state, from whence, after it had been regularly inserted in the minutes, it was transmitted to the different branches of the administration to which it more immediately related.

The decree for the dismissal of the officer of hussars, and that for filling up the appointment to his rank, were accordingly sent to that office. There was no possibility of evading their execution; but the Prince of Neufchatel's mind was so successfully worked upon, that the council of war did not take place; the officer, dismissed, returned back to Paris, where, two months after the Emperor's arrival, the same patronage procured his being nominated one of the chamberlains. Great care was taken to remove from the Emperor the slightest suspicion that a rank in his household was conferred upon the very officer of hussars who had been dismissed two months before. This was not all: that officer's interest was sufficiently powerful to procure his being reinstated in the army: in less than two years he became chief of a squadron, and a member of the Legion of Honour. I was not aware that this chamberlain was the officer of hussars who had been denounced in my presence by his own regiment; it was not till a long time afterwards that I mentioned the circumstance to the Emperor, in order to convince him how deep was the artfulness of intrigue, when it could succeed in introducing into his household those men who had no other merit than to be faithful reporters, out of doors, of whatever came there under their notice.

The same care was taken to introduce into the households of the several members of his family, all those whose services were thought available for the purpose of injuring the individuals who already held employments in them.

The Emperor expressed himself greatly dissatisfied at having been thus imposed upon; but we were too deeply involved in difficulties to have it in our power to alter the course which had so long been pursued.

Every circumstance of this nature which came under my notice had the effect of giving me a disgust for the functions of the ministry of police. I had the choice of two evils—either to practise daily impositions upon the Emperor, by becoming

an accomplice of those wretched intriguers, or subject myself to unceasing vexations, by attempting to defeat them; I could not act a neutral part on the occasion. I compounded with such as were calculated to produce dangerous results, by warning the principal actors in them, that others besides myself had their eyes open to the imperfections which abound in the world: that I heartily wished for their sakes I were the only one likely to interfere with their improper proceedings; but gave them notice that if their names were ever brought in question, I should not be withheld from divulging every thing I knew regarding them by any apprehension of the consequences.

I kept my word: there were, however, some few persons of both sexes who, having to complain of severity exercised towards them, have both suspected and arraigned me as the cause of what had happened to them. This was the more unjust on their part, as I was fully acquainted with every thing that related to them; and so far from doing them an injury, have sometimes averted a storm, by drawing off the attention to some other object. I have at this moment more than one enemy who owes me a debt of gratitude in this respect; an assertion which there would be no difficulty in proving in the clearest manner. Generally speaking, those disagreeable vexations springing out of the intercourse of society had no foundation whatever: I considered them as the signal for the winding up of some intrigues which had been long hatching; and, at the same time, as the mask assumed by malevolence, when aiming to do any one an injury. I came to the determination of endeavouring to impose upon that description of people, rather than be incessantly engaged in counteracting their intrigues.

I caused false reports to be circulated; and soon succeeded so effectually in palming them upon the credulity of our would-be genteel people, that they were brought back to me in the garb of real facts. As some of them were of a satirical

tendency, and were occasionally levelled at individuals who lived on intimate terms with me, I did not fail to notice the wicked intentions with which the most cutting stories were attributed to persons against whom it was wished to excite my prejudices; and the stories of a contrary character to those, on whose behalf it was an object to obtain my good graces. I pretended to believe every thing; recompensed the informer's zeal, which only put me in possession of what emanated from myself, but so embellished, so altered and amplified, that I could no longer recognise my own offspring. My purpose was, for a short time, fully answered by this method; but every thing falls into disuse, and in Paris sooner than any where else.

The more I proceeded in my course, the less I could understand how a powerful state could have occasion for a ministry, the inefficacy of which, not to say its absolute nonentity, were manifested to me: the aspect of the political horizon was before my eyes, but I was blind to its operating causes.

Had I acted upon precedents, I could easily have created a clamour, in order afterwards to calm it. At times, this course may be found useful, and I have resorted to it when I wished to divert attention from an object I had essentially at heart to secure, but from the pursuit of which a mere look would have detached me. Such a mode of proceeding did not accord with my wishes, and could only be applied to specific operations. I had no sooner attained an object, than I dismissed it from my thoughts: the work to be done, and the discoveries which still baffled my penetration, were alone calculated to annoy me.

To a portion of my voluminous correspondence I bestowed the most unceasing attention; that which related to the world in general, I reserved for a mere pastime.

By the former, I discovered that Paris exercised a prodigious influence over the departments, and that the metropolis

itself was subject to the influence of the government and of foreigners.

That which was exerted by the government was felt by all who were in any way connected with, or who subsisted by it. Notwithstanding that the number of these was very great, it would have been almost in vain to assign to them the task of forcing public opinion into any particular channel, in the event of occurrences which might have militated against too many interests.

CHAPTER IV.

State of the public mind in France—Its fluctuations—Want of confidence in official communications—Couriers belonging to ambassadors—Line of correspondence with England—Agent of the Queen of Etruria—Papers found on his person—The Queen of Etruria sent to Rome—The Emperor's moderation.

PUBLIC opinion in France may, at all times, be compared to the atmosphere: it bore an exact proportion to the harmony subsisting between us and the other powers of Europe with respect to our reciprocal intercourse.

In time of war, when battles were won which were calculated to bring about a peace, every thing went on well; when the contest had been of doubtful issue, the very contrary took place. During peace, the attention of every one was fixed upon the acts of government, and its financial operations, which became at once the guide of those men who stood in need of quiet, in order to embark in commercial speculations. The persons opposed to government were also guided by that state of fluctuation: they either revived or lost courage, according as their hopes of success were elevated or depressed by the state of political affairs. A battle lost upon the Elbe was felt for a month afterwards on the banks of the Loire.

A successful engagement in the same quarter appeared to be the pledge of long years of tranquillity. When fighting was out of the question, there was another thermometer to go by: hope being the only consolation for the unhappy, intrigues would then come into play, until some fortunate circumstance should dictate another attitude.

I was thus forced to drag on the whole time of my administration, and compelled to be always prepared for every hypothetical case; and none but fools or madmen can believe the French to be so bereft of reason, as to be open to imposition respecting any occurrence which they have as great an interest in knowing, as might be felt in deceiving them by the person who could harbour such a design.

This is a truth which immediately struck me; and all my anxiety was exclusively directed to the object of remedying the evil effects of any unpleasant event, without ever attempting to present it under a false aspect.

Those who, in their intercourse with the Emperor, made this a ground of reproach against me, by ascribing it to want of shrewdness on my part, were mere fools, who deceived the Emperor, and him alone, in so far as that he persisted in the system of silence, which allowed evil-minded people to exaggerate what was wrong, and to throw the good into the shade. They afterwards pretended that it was necessary to enlighten public opinion, and to prevent the language of censure from having such free circulation; their own disappointed hopes serving them as a stimulus for speaking in terms of reprobation of those whose downfall they had vowed to accomplish. Public opinion is never led astray respecting facts which are well known all over Europe. The French have none of the Hottentot in their composition; and woe betide any one who might pretend to dupe them with impunity! They are patient and enduring; but they take a signal revenge of injuries when the opportunity offers: and the wretches who, only intent upon the gratification of their

own vanity, have drawn down upon a master they perhaps wished to serve, the momentary ill-will of the French nation, deserve to bear all the weight of its indignation in return for the injuries they have inflicted upon it.

It generally happened, therefore, that at the very moment when the influence of the ministry should have been exerted over public opinion, the public showed itself refractory and mistrustful of whatever bore the stamp of office about it. Those who represented the fact in any other light were working to deceive themselves, in order to put on the disguise at least of candour, when they were attempting to lead astray the very man to whom the evil should have been laid open in all its reality, whilst it still depended upon him to effect its cure.

A foreign influence was exercised in Paris by the necessity of a peace which was so generally felt by all.

Those who had recently acquired fortunes, which they were desirous to remove from the remotest part of Poland to perhaps the southern extremity of France: the men whose speculations, or their continued possession of lucrative employments, wholly depended upon the stability of the imperial institutions, which could only acquire deep root from the durability of their existence; an existence which every fresh campaign seemed to place in jeopardy: the nation, in short, to a man, foresaw that the loss of a single battle would ruin a multitude of families, whose destinies were all stamped for their fortune, or for their ruin, on the reverse of the same medal. This conviction threw the public mind into a state of uneasiness, and made it susceptible of such rapid and fluctuating changes. Its hopes revived by success, as infallibly as a storm settles into a calm under the genial influence of the sun. No security, however, can be found in a state of uncertainty.

The want of confidence in official communications, the only ones held out to public curiosity, had driven society to feed

upon foreign information. From that moment, diplomatic employments were eagerly courted ; and many persons thereby obtained what was well described as an unlimited credit upon public credulity. They exchanged the information they had acquired for that which was afforded them in return. A foreign influence was thus exercised over Paris ; the baneful effects of which could not be arrested by immovable silence. It is clear that the administration alone could remedy this evil ; but it is not my province, any more than my business, to pronounce judgment upon its conduct : my only object is to describe the unhappy consequences of the course which it was thought proper to pursue.

I no sooner discovered this general tendency to seek for foreign information, than it became my duty to watch the sources from whence any favourable intelligence, as well of that of a contrary description, emanated ; and I then began to direct my attention to the circle of foreign ambassadors. On the day following that of the arrival of any courier, I caused questions to be put to such courier, in order to sound the state of the public mind in the country from whence he had been sent, and at the moment of his departure from it. If he was unable to answer the questions, the succeeding courier was generally better informed. Many intelligent men are to be found amongst cabinet messengers, who can write a journal of their travels with as much accuracy as the most clear-sighted staff-officer.

When the ambassadors of great powers received several couriers at one time, and in regular succession, there was less facility in obtaining in that quarter any important information, than from the envoys of lesser powers ; the correctness of whose intelligence was to them an object of incalculable advantage, as it gave them additional weight at their own courts.

Each of the envoys of these lesser powers moves round the orbit of a greater power, renders it the tribute of his homage,

affords it such information as there are means of obtaining, and is allowed in return the privilege of sending his dispatches by the couriers of the former; a necessity imposed upon him by the want of a sufficient pecuniary allowance, to afford him the means of sending a special messenger of his own.

The envoy avails himself likewise of the patronage created by this mode of communication to inquire for any intelligence from his own court, of which the courier last arrived may have been the bearer. The ambassador is never very open in his communications: few of them, however, are found to transact their business in person: this duty generally devolves upon the individuals attached to their respective missions. The whole secret consists in ascertaining who is most likely to be well acquainted with the facts which it is desirable to discover; and as this particular inquiry does not appear to conceal any latent object, no one ever shows any reluctance to state the truth: which is no sooner known, than it naturally becomes an easy task to find out the private habits of the individuals holding those subaltern employments, who are generally found to frequent the middling classes, rather than the more elevated ranks of society.

The particular tastes or habits of a man are no sooner known, than he becomes the tool of whosoever can pander to them. I have known agents who were so dexterous in this system of corruption, that they would make a gambler of any man who resisted their attacks; would win all his money; involve him, besides, in debt; and after placing him in this dilemma, would enter into composition with him; and, be it said to the disgrace of human nature, seldom failed of complete success. Those men for whom gambling had no attractions were mostly found to be accessible through the artifices of women, in many of whom so much skill and experience were combined, that they very seldom encountered any difficulties which they had it not in their power to overcome.

When foreign couriers arrived in Paris, the news which they brought was generally known a few days afterwards; and the same channel of information also furnished me with an abstract of the answers they were directed to take back to their respective courts. I have even occasionally been put in possession of complete copies of their dispatches.

It was a prevalent opinion that, in consequence of the Emperor's marriage, all ideas of war would thenceforth be relinquished; and it was, nevertheless, from that moment that the intercourse between foreign powers became more reserved. I particularly allude to the relations between France and Russia; for the language held by England had for many years been uniformly the same.

The private intelligence we derived from England and Russia had the effect of disturbing the calm of our repose; that intelligence exhibited an intense curiosity respecting our internal condition, which was looked upon as the thermometer of the efforts we might have it in our power to display in the event of any fresh war. The small confederated powers of the Rhine were not behind-hand in discovering that the political horizon portended an approaching storm; and as they had become deeply interested in the permanence of the ascendancy of France, which had had the effect of nearly doubling the extent of their political power, they neglected no means of being correctly informed of whatever concerned those interests upon which their own were engrafted. Their ministers at foreign courts accordingly directed their utmost care and vigilance to discover whatever was in agitation, whilst their representatives in Paris exhausted every means to procure information respecting the state of affairs in Spain, the only balance by which they measured the probabilities of peace or war. They could only obtain intelligence of a positive nature on this subject through the correspondence with England, on which they placed the greater reliance, as they frequently had occasion to remark the striking contrast

exhibited by English publications, as compared with those of France, with regard to the war in Spain.

The correspondence with England was of the most limited nature, not so much on the above account, as from motives of a private nature.

I did not much rely upon the assurances given to me of the faithful execution of the orders which had been issued on this subject. I exercised a strict watch over each arrival and departure: every thing appeared in rule, when I felt an inward foreboding that there existed some clandestine sources of communication, which I bent all my attention to discover. I spread the report that I should not be too strict in granting a passport for England to any one who might be strongly recommended as incapable of mixing in political affairs; but under the express condition that he would keep his departure a profound secret, as I neither wished to be importuned for many such passports, nor to be placed under the necessity of refusing those who might flatter themselves that I would yield to their intreaties. This report could not fail to produce the desired effect. I was at first applied to for one or two passports, which I promised, though under various pretexts not until the expiration of a few days. The fact was, I had my precautions to adopt; and I accordingly soon ascertained that letters were preparing for England in certain houses of the Fauxbourg St. Germain. I also got my own letters in readiness for my chief commissary of police at Boulogne, who, on the messenger's arrival, had him thoroughly searched, in spite of my passports, and carried away all his letters, it having been well understood before his departure, as the express condition upon which the passport was granted, that he should not take charge of a single letter. By this means I acquired the conviction that a regular correspondence was kept up with England, since the greater part of those letters were replies to others which had been received from that country.

I thus became acquainted with the names of the correspondents of both countries; and the letters also afforded me the means of protecting them from any calumnious imputation with which they might be charged, as they exhibited a clear proof that certain individuals, who were described to me as turbulent characters, never harboured the thought of creating the least disturbance, whatever occurrences might have taken place to favour such a disposition, if they had entertained it.

I suffered all those letters to reach their destination, and threw my nets into the channels therein pointed out for transmitting the replies. This success, however inconsiderable, suggested to me the idea of not only favouring the transit of such letters instead of obstructing it, but also of availing myself of any advantage they might afford me.

I should have looked in vain along the whole extent of coast from Dieppe to Blankenberg for the object of my search: every movement was too well concerted in those quarters; and I contrived another mode of carrying my views into effect.

I sent on an excursion along the coast of England two agents of great dexterity, and of respectable appearance, who were afterwards to return clandestinely to France. These agents, thus disguised, were not likely to create any mistrust on the British coast. They were accordingly well received, and even assisted. They each carried a small parcel of contraband goods, which tended to increase the number of their friends; and an intercourse was eventually opened for the one who was to embark at Gravesend, with the fishermen from Ostend and its vicinity, who carried on a petty traffic with England. He saw them approach the coast of England, land their passengers, not one of whom was in rule, and deliver up the letters intrusted to their care; and he entered into an agreement with one of them to take him back to France, and land him in safety, so as to enable him to reach Belgium. By this means

he returned to Ostend; and was from thence conducted, from one station to another, until he reached the depôt of English prisoners at Valenciennes, who always proceeded on the same road, on their way to the place of embarkation, whenever they succeeded in effecting their escape. On this occasion I killed two birds with one stone; first, by deranging this line of communication, and afterwards establishing another in imitation of it, for the purpose of favouring the escape of our prisoners from England: but the discovery of a boat which clandestinely proceeded from the coast to Gravesend, became, at a later period, a mine for my ingenuity to explore.

I caused arrangements to be entered into with the master of the boat; promised never to arrest him; but, on the contrary, to allow of his passing to and fro, if he took proper care to conceal his movements; but on condition, that when he should have conveyed any Frenchmen across, whether from one shore or the other, he would faithfully apprise me of the circumstance. Those in England, who saw him bringing over French passengers, felt no difficulty in embarking with him; but the passengers whom he was conveying there were only taken on their return, because they were generally the bearers of many letters with regular addresses upon them; whereas, on their departure for England, they usually took letters without any signature, and were ignorant of the sources from whence they emanated. As soon as any one was arrested by these means, his letters were put into circulation, after copies had been taken of the contents and directions. A regular correspondence was thereby set on foot in a very short time; as, in consequence of a police agent having spread the report in Belgium of his knowing a secure channel through which any thing might be forwarded to England, every one intrusted him with letters and commissions. This was productive of a lucrative income to the agent, who was faithful to my trust, and useful to the inhabitants. I even gained

the further object, that this proprietor of boats, unwilling to submit to the competition of his rivals in the contraband traffic, gave information respecting every Dutch or Blankenberg boat which he met at Gravesend; and he was the means of making me acquainted with the line of communications established between Longwy and Blankenberg, to which latter place the English prisoners were guided through the forest of Ardennes, Liege, and Belgium. He also furnished me with demonstrative evidence that I was occasionally imposed upon by my own agents, an imposition of which I took no notice, as it had no other effect than to promote their trifling pecuniary profits. My sport along this coast was very successful. This traffic had existed for many years; and the public service seemed to require that a stop should be put to it. I allowed the cry of tyranny to be raised against me, but insisted upon being obeyed.

I was furnished with no less important information by the other agent, who returned by the coast of Picardy. He had proceeded as far as London, and established in that capital a means of correspondence, which was so carefully kept up by my superior agents on the coast, that they procured me regular intelligence from London in the space of seventy-two hours; and as often as an extraordinary cabinet council was held, or any important intelligence was received from Spain, an extraordinary courier was sent to me, by which means the Emperor was as quickly informed of the news as if the courier had come from no greater distance than Mentz.

Amongst the letters which I caused to be examined at Ostend were found those written to the Prince Regent of England by the ex-queen of Etruria, who was living in retirement at Nice. They brought to my knowledge that this princess had sent, some months before, as her agent to the British government, a subject of Tuscany, who, for want of sufficient funds to proceed on his journey, had been compelled to remain at Amsterdam, where he was still waiting for

replies to the urgent solicitations he had transmitted to the ex-queen at her residence in Nice.

I caused him to be arrested at Amsterdam, and sent on to Paris. He carried about his person the powers with which he was invested as chargé d'affaires from the ex-queen of Etruria, his instructions to repair to England, and the letters from this princess to the Prince Regent. She had even made her son write to the prince. The child's handwriting was that of a mere schoolboy, who could only pen large letters upon ruled paper.

Besides these documents, the chargé d'affaires had many other papers belonging to the princess, which were greatly calculated to compromise her. She had directed him to lay all that trash before the English government, as a proof that she might serve their cause, in consequence of the attachment of the Spaniards for her person, and of her having it in her power to do an essential injury to the French, by inducing the Spanish prisoners confined in the depôts of Languedoc to rise in a body against their jailers. There were found, in fact, amongst those papers, several letters from Spanish officers, with whom she had been tampering for some time, and feeding them with the hope of an insurrection, by declaring that she would place herself at their head on their return to Spain. These letters established, beyond all doubt, that she had written to persuade them to this course, and had obtained from them every promise she desired. It was an act of absolute folly, which must have ended in the destruction of the unhappy prisoners. The ex-queen was well aware of it; and I really believe she had only made all this stir in order to give herself an air of importance with the British government, from whom she was anxious to obtain some pecuniary assistance.

The most rigid inquiry was instituted into the whole affair. The Emperor forgave the chargé d'affaires of the ex-queen; but with respect to herself, he had her removed to the convent in Rome to which the Princess of Parma, her relative,

had retired to a life of seclusion. He ordered that expresses should be sent to her father, King Charles IV., who was at Marseilles, and to the Spanish princes at Valençay, with a communication of all the documents which had placed him under the necessity of adopting that course; and his orders were punctually obeyed. The ex-queen travelled with a retinue of two or three carriages, the expenses of which were defrayed until her arrival in Rome. Her son had been taken away from her, and sent to Charles IV., his grandfather.

A feeling of respect for this monarch prevented any publicity of the above circumstances; and I ask any rational man what he would have thought, had he seen collected together, in a printed form, all the papers that had been seized upon the person of the chargé d'affaires of the ex-queen of Etruria, coupled with the letters she had written from the very palace of Madrid to the Grand-duke of Berg, wherein she gave him, at different hours of the day, a detailed account of the acts and movements of her brother, the present King Ferdinand VII.? It will be in the recollection of my readers that they had been sent to the Emperor. Her conduct on that occasion had raised a prejudice against her. The Emperor therefore preferred allowing a free vent to the outcry raised against this pretended act of despotism, rather than add to the affliction of King Charles IV., by placing him under the painful necessity of despising his own daughter. Thus it was, that whilst searching along the coast of Belgium for the clue to the clandestine communications kept up with England, my attention was directed to the shores of the Mediterranean, and to the depôts of prisoners of war at Carcassonne, Tournon, and other places, where a conviction was entertained that I had a host of spies at my command. By thus making myself the channel of the secret intercourse carried on with England, I gradually became intimately acquainted with whatever came from foreign countries—I allude to Germany and England, and reciprocally of what was sent to those countries, because the

old custom of writing by way of Brussels was still generally prevalent throughout the Austrian dominions.

A great part of the correspondence sent to London, by way of Holland, came likewise to merge in that which was carried on by the coast of Ostend; so that in a very short time I acquired a treasure of addresses for every country. As many of the letters were sent in duplicate, one of the sets was retained as a specimen of the writer's hand, until the author of the letters should become personally known.

It sometimes happened, by these means, that, without leaving my closet, I was a party to the intercourse kept up between Vienna and London, and particularly between the lesser German courts and the latter city. Many persons were on the alert to find out the spies whom they imagined to be watching their movements; whilst my clue for ascertaining what concerned them was no other than what I have been describing.

CHAPTER V.

The author exercises a rigid watch over the bathing towns of Bohemia and Italy—Means and motives for so doing—M. Martin—Escape of prisoners of war—Means of information in England—Assistance derived by the author from the trading community—The Prince of Orange—Underhand conduct of Austria—Fragments of the civil war.

I HAD effectually succeeded, at last, in discovering the various channels of intercourse between London and the most distant parts of the continent, and consequently in becoming acquainted with some official agents of the British government, who, without being vested with an acknowledged public character, proceeded, nevertheless, in every direction, to carry on the business intrusted to their care.

I likewise discovered, by an attentive search into the clandestine correspondence, the names of the parties who had agreed to meet at the waters of Bohemia, Italy, Baden, and Aix-la-Chapelle. Oftentimes, when the societies were not yet assembled, I knew the greater part of those who were to compose it; and according as I considered them calculated to afford some gratification to my curiosity, I selected some of our would-be genteel people, who asked no better than to repair to those scenes of enjoyment, which always possess sufficient attractions for the amateurs of gambling and of idle pleasures.

Some I have found to be so expert as to have their expenses defrayed by the dupe of their impositions, and of whose carriage and servants they made a very unceremonious use. They afterwards succeeded in being conveyed back by some female; and actually returned to Paris, without having opened their purse-strings, with money won at gambling, and even with the affection of those whose ruin they had accomplished.

Two or three such excursions were sufficient to give a thorough insight into the habits of a whole country. There were no better sources of information than what were afforded by the societies at bathing-places, where all restraint is laid aside: the hours hang heavily on hand; and freedom of communication is an indispensable enjoyment.

To all these sources of information I could not but attach great importance; as I conceived that the clouds gathering in foreign countries would sometimes come to obscure our own atmosphere: for when I read a piece of intelligence in any letter, whether from London or other places, and found it in general circulation, I was at no loss to ascertain the source from whence it sprang. I have been wrongfully accused of attempting to meddle in politics: a weak mind alone is incapable of distinguishing between being correctly informed, and inducing others to speak without disguise.

I felt the more anxious to be quickly apprised of every

thing, through different channels, as the exterior indications of tranquillity or alarm had a corresponding effect upon our internal condition.

I was about to explore the universities of Germany, when an accident happened to me, which too clearly demonstrated its absolute necessity. I will presently relate this circumstance, after disposing of what more immediately applies to England.

M. Martin, the police commissary at Boulogne, was a man who combined with the most polished manners very considerable talents: he was, above all, incapable of failing in the duties he owed his country. I had procured him his appointment, and always had reason to applaud my choice, and to be satisfied with his conduct towards me, under more unfavourable circumstances.

He had so thoroughly penetrated into the spirit of the English periodical publications, that, independently of the information they contained, he drew consequences from them which served him as a guide in what he was desirous of ascertaining. He acquired such a reputation for vigilance along that coast, that nothing was impossible to him. He greatly increased the facilities of escape for French prisoners, in conformity with the orders I had given him to that effect. He favoured the evasion of some of them from an inland distance of fifty leagues. I was unacquainted with the resources he had at command; but he would have sent to pick the very pockets of a king, had he found it necessary to do so; and what was of still greater advantage, he knew when to set his springs in motion, and when to desist from his enterprise.

This facility of communication along the coast of Boulogne could not escape observation in London, where it was calculated to create the same effect that was produced in France by the discovery of an intercourse which was supposed to be a profound secret. English commerce, therefore, could not resist the temptation of approaching the coast, gradually ac-

quired confidence, and finally transmitted its letters in that direction: not one of them was kept back: they were however very strictly examined; and until this little contrivance became known, some important matters were always divulged, not by the commercial letters themselves, but by others which were generally enclosed in them.

These letters were followed by a few travellers; and again by some returns. Matters had gone on so far as to have opened that communication with England which it was deemed necessary to establish, with the view of discovering the nature and extent of her intercourse with us. It would otherwise have been necessary to carry on vexatious proceedings against every one, in order to ascertain what might sometimes have no existence whatever; because when nothing is correctly seen or known, prudence enjoins the utmost circumspection.

Whilst my attention was directed to the coast of Flanders and Picardy, a much more guilty correspondence was carrying on between Bordeaux and Lisbon. I soon acquired proofs of the fact; but the events occurred in too rapid succession to enable my following it up, the rather so as it involved certain high personages whom I did not suspect to be guilty of a conduct which will be stated in its naked truth. They loaded in the Garonne, by means of licenses, several cargoes of wine, brandy, and flour, which were sent for the express purpose of supplying the English army at Lisbon.

It was supposed that I always had agents about the residence of the princes of the house of Bourbon: this was assuredly not the case. On one occasion only, I was furnished with every domestic detail concerning the residence they occupied, by means of old servants who had returned to France; but I never sent any one there on a special mission. In the first place, such a measure would have been useless: so long as we could make all Europe tremble from one extremity to the other, the palace of Hartwell was not much to be dreaded; and when we no longer commanded obedience in Paris, it

was too late to attend to that object. Besides which, I believe the Emperor himself would have taken in very bad part that any other means had not been resorted to, if there had existed any motives for keeping a watchful eye upon that palace: added to which, the English newspapers said as much as we could wish to learn respecting any domestic movements. The zeal of my subordinate agents never relaxed, and I rewarded them well for it; but as one grows weary of every thing, as a cord loses its elasticity by being overstretched, I endeavoured to strengthen my means of communication by giving to foreigners themselves an interest in keeping it up, so as to be able under all circumstances to rely upon their punctuality.

In furtherance of this object, I afforded a special, an almost exclusive protection to those who carried on the trade in guineas; and in consequence of having put down the competition existing between several Englishmen, I succeeded in procuring such large profits to those towards whom I extended my protection, that so far from refusing me any service, they were anxious to anticipate my wishes. Being themselves personally interested in obtaining early information of those political events which had an influence in raising or depressing the public funds, I might rely upon them as securely, as it was their own interest to communicate to me the first knowledge they might acquire of any important occurrence as soon as the newspaper arrived. If I found there had been any neglect on their part in giving me timely notice, it was sufficient punishment to delay for a few hours the delivery of their letters. The world in general can form no idea of the advantage for a man in business to receive his letters from London before the hour of change. As for those who brought me good news, I allowed the courier who was the bearer of them to take charge also of their commercial letters. Some men were simple enough to say every where that there must exist a channel of private communication with

England: it required no conjurer to find that out; but their minds were on the rack to come at a source of more valuable information.

The Prince of Neufchatel has told me, that during the whole time of Marshal Massena's remaining stationary before Lisbon, when all communication with him was cut off, it was only through the reports which I obtained in this manner that the Emperor had acquired a knowledge of the situation of his affairs in Portugal, and was enabled to decide upon the course which he thought proper to adopt.

On the other hand, I sent to London certain instructions for obtaining fresh information. I discovered, by the means to which I have adverted, that a quantity of letters were addressed to one particular house in London; and soon learned that it was the best hotel in that capital, what we call in France an excellent inn, at which foreigners generally alighted. I took care to call for the names of all the travellers who arrived there.

A list of the lodgers at an hotel is very easily made out when no previous one exists, and as easily procured in the contrary case. When this list was compared with the record kept at Gravesend, where the *alien office* registered the names of all foreigners on their arrival, and both were again compared with the reports of the Ostend boatmen, I found that there existed another means of communicating with England which had been hitherto unknown to me. There was little probability of its eluding my search. I had succeeded in tracing a foreigner from London to his original point of departure; and was at this time made acquainted with the voyage of an officer belonging to the Prince of Orange, who then resided in Berlin, and had sent him to the hereditary prince of that family, who was serving in the English army in Portugal. It was natural to suppose that some important matters must have been in agitation, when an officer had been dispatched to the young prince from so great a distance.

I had him watched on his return: gave information of the fact; and he was arrested at Hamburgh with all his letters. The case had been treated with too much severity at Hamburgh, since it was not yet known whether the voyage was connected with any political intrigue.

I did all in my power to assuage the misfortune, which was the only reward of the fidelity of this worthy officer, who had displayed great fortitude and resignation under such severe treatment. His wife hastened to join him from Berlin in the utmost state of agitation. I allowed her every facility she could desire for seeing him, and afterwards set her husband at liberty.

He appeared to have been sent to the young Prince of Orange by the Prince's own father respecting family affairs, which were of no public interest, with this exception, however, that the letters brought back were replies to the advice given him by his father to solicit the hand of the Princess Royal of England; a connexion not much to the young Prince's taste. He alleged as his motive an apprehension of not finding in that union the happiness which is the only object of marriage, without a certainty of which he would renounce all thoughts of it. He plainly said, in short, that he feared he never could accustom himself to the domineering conduct which he thought it would be the lot of her future husband to submit to.

This was no praise of the Princess of England; and his mind had not yet acquired a philosophical turn respecting the female character. It was no doubt his wish that the Princess Charlotte should be nothing more than Princess of Orange, but that he should become a prince of England.

By means of that establishment in London I was enabled to discover the names of all persons arriving from the Hans Towns, from Prussia, Saxony, and even Austria; which last country requested permission of us, as will hereafter be seen, to

send her couriers through Calais,* in order to throw us off the scent of those which she sent through the north of Germany. They certainly succeeded in escaping from my grasp, because they travelled through Saxony, Prussia, Denmark, and occasionally Heligoland, to London, where my agent witnessed their arrival. Had it not been for the misfortunes which subsequently occurred, I should have eventually drawn them into my nets, not with the view of preventing their proceeding on their journey, nor even of retarding it, but merely to cast an eye over the contents of their dispatches, which were unquestionably of a different complexion from those which that cabinet transmitted by way of Calais.

The result of this would have been, that the couriers who were supposed to have eluded our search would have been exposed to it; and those who were expected to be searched would have been allowed to pass unmolested.

I was well acquainted with the road by which they proceeded; and must inevitably have fallen upon some means, between Vienna and Denmark, of discovering the exact truth. All this mystery brought gloomy reflections to my mind, whilst they compelled me to acknowledge that we made no progress towards a state of tranquillity; and that if we were not yet involved in difficulties, the public feeling in foreign countries was unanimous respecting France; and a single reverse of fortune would be sufficient to ruin our cause.

The more we obstructed the intercourse of England with the rest of Europe, the more general and the stronger became the desire to open a friendly intercourse with her. The most odious epithets were accordingly levelled at us by those whose views were thwarted by our measures.

For this unnatural state of things, the only remedy was peace. All parties sighed for it; and it might have been ob-

* Ever since the Emperor's marriage, Austria had a chargé d'affaires in London, M. Weissemberg; and had requested permission from France to correspond with him through Calais.

tained, had it not been for all the intrigues, all the private and foreign ambitions, which had combined to mislead the Emperor. His enemies saw full well that a peace would fix his power upon an imperishable basis: they resolved to sap it by a war; and were so far successful, as to persuade the French that the Emperor desired it: an imputation to which they yielded a credulous assent.

Before pursuing this point any further, I must not omit to state by what means I sounded the feelings of those who had survived the civil war in the west of France, and who resided in England.

This branch of the police labours was placed in very skilful hands; and a correct statement had been drawn up of all who had figured in the different parties which had successively desolated the western provinces.

An agent was kept in London, whose sole occupation was to visit them every fortnight; pass them, as it were, in review; and whenever any one disappeared, immediately to give notice of it; and they were sought for in that part of France where they had served during the period of the civil commotions, previously to their flying to England. If they eluded our search, some trace of them was always to be discovered; because the first want felt by an individual thus thrown upon the coast, was to proceed in quest of the old acquaintances he had left behind.

Scarcely any one of those who were sent in this manner from England could succeed in escaping detection. Some of them were afterwards found disposed to give information respecting others; and we thus became acquainted with all the roads taken by these unfortunate men, who were sent to certain death; because the servants of curates, curates themselves, and other persons in the confidence of the police, being once known, preferred giving information of whatever happened to them, rather than expose themselves to misfortune.

It must be allowed that I was tolerably well acquainted, by

this time, with my chess-board, both in the provinces and beyond the frontier.

CHAPTER VI.

The old Queen of Naples—Intention to renew the Sicilian Vespers—The Queen solicits the assistance of France—The Emperor's indignation—Operations of the army of Portugal—General Brenier—Raising of the siege of Badajoz.

We were at the beginning of the autumn of 1810: the Emperor had, at this time, on his hands the affairs to be arranged with the Pope, and the management of the campaign in Portugal. Our army had entered Andalusia, and even marched upon Cadiz. The sieges of the towns in Catalonia were pushed on with great activity: the administration of the Illyrian provinces was organised into a distinct government; that is to say, they had their special budget of receipts and expenditure; and their resources and wants were no longer mixed up with those of other provinces, a proof that they were not destined to remain in our possession, whenever a favourable opportunity might offer for exchanging them.

Marshal Marmont had the government of this small state, of which Laybach was the chief town.

A circumstance happened to him, which would appear quite incredible if we had not both been eye-witnesses of the occurrence.

A Sicilian brig of war hove in sight of one of the small ports of Dalmatia, under pretence of avoiding the Neapolitan coast, where it was apprehensive of being betrayed, and landed an officer belonging to the Sicilian navy, who was in the confidential employment of the late Queen of Naples and Sicily. She sent him officially to the principal officer in com-

mand, for whom he was the bearer of a most extraordinary commission.

Marshal Marmont having sent him to me, I interrogated him, and received his written declaration, to which he affixed his signature. It related that the Queen of Sicily, who was impatient to shake off the English yoke, had resolved to attempt it by renewing against them the Sicilian Vespers, as soon as she might feel satisfied that, in the event of failure, she might rely upon finding an asylum, not in the kingdom of Naples, but in some other part of Italy under the French dominion.

The officer added that every thing was in readiness for the execution of this project, which was to take place immediately after his return to Sicily. He laid open all the means of success which the Queen had at her command; and there is no doubt, in fact, that unless this guilty attempt should fully answer the object in view, it would have doomed many an unfortunate wretch to certain destruction.

After receiving the declaration of the Sicilian officer, it became my duty to communicate it to the Emperor. He read the whole proposal, and could not repress his indignation at the presumption that he could have lent his assistance to such a cowardly massacre. He ordered me to detain, for an indefinite period, that is to say, until the conclusion of the war, the Sicilian officer, who was in consequence lodged in the castle of Vincennes, where he was still confined when the allies entered Paris. He has since died. His name was Amelia, and must still be found inserted in the registers of the court of that dungeon, where it may readily be seen.

A few months after this event, the foreign newspapers alluded to the discovery made by the English in Sicily of a project for putting them to death; and several arrests took place, which were followed by a trial and a capital punishment. There is no doubt, that if I had not detained the Sicilian officer, he might have found his way back to the Queen, and

made her anticipate, by two months, the period for carrying the plan into effect, which would have happened previously to the English being apprised of it.

It has been a very prevalent opinion that every means of destroying the English would find acceptance with the Emperor. In refutation of this I have just related a fact which is personal to him, and is still unknown in France, because he had ordered me not to divulge it to the world.

I have already mentioned that the Emperor sent Marshal Massena to assume the command of the army which was opposed to the enemy along the Douro. It penetrated into Portugal, came up with the English at Busaco, but was unable to attack them in proper time. It marched upon the English in a compact body; but they had likewise concentrated their forces, and were strongly posted on all the heights, from whence it was found impossible to dislodge them. Our army fortunately discovered a road which they had neglected to protect, and continued its advance by a bold flank-movement, which the enemy did not venture to obstruct. But as every thing is pretty evenly compensated in all human actions, it soon met with wholly unexpected obstacles, and arrived in front of the lines of Torres Vedras, which the Anglo-Portuguese had long before put into a state of defence; and it soon had to encounter every species of privation.

Whilst that army was thus advancing through numberless difficulties, the corps commanded by Marshal Bessières in Castille remained in a state of inaction. Had it been ordered by the Emperor to join in the invasion, Marshal Massena would have added it to his own forces: but this was beyond his power; and a corps which would have been of such essential service to him under the walls of Lisbon, where he was prevented from molesting the English whilst carrying on their works of defence, remained perfectly stationary. Had it even moved upon Coimbra, it would have spared the army of Marshal Massena the necessity of dividing itself into numberless

detachments, which were compelled to scour the country for the purpose of providing subsistence for the troops that remained in camp. Thus it happened that one half of that army was engaged on detached services, and that plunder was converted into a system, under pretext of organising the means of subsistence. In a short time it became unable to undertake any attack against the English army, which was daily increasing in numbers, and was abundantly supplied with every thing it stood in need of.

Both armies allowed the bad season to pass in this manner; the one in need of the most indispensable articles, the other luxuriating in abundance.

The army of Marshal Massena might be said to have disappeared from the living, so little was it spoken of, owing to the difficulties thrown in the way of all communications by the insurrectionary bands which infested the country. The only intelligence obtained of it was through the reports I had found the means of procuring from London, where they were copied from Lord Wellington's dispatches. We ascertained by this means that the English had carried off and sent to England whatever Marshal Massena had left at Coimbra. It also was the means of informing the Emperor of the retreat of that marshal, and of enabling him to send Bessières to his support. Had it not been for this channel of information, the English army would have driven Massena to the very cantonments occupied by Bessières, who had not received such timely information as to be enabled to assemble his army for immediate action. The Emperor blamed Massena for having thus ventured to advance upon Lisbon without having it in his power to carry that city. He would have preferred his confining the seat of war to the neighbourhood of Coimbra, from whence he might have annoyed the English army so effectually as to compel it to reimbark. There is no doubt that Massena might have stood his ground in that city; but he would have infallibly subjected himself to animadversion for

doing so, and to the remark that if he had moved upon Lisbon without stopping, he would not have allowed the English any breathing time, but would have entered the capital pell-mell with them.

There would in fact have been some colourable pretence for this objection, which envy or malignity might easily have turned to Marshal Massena's prejudice.

There could, indeed, have been no doubt of success if the corps of Marshal Bessières had joined Massena's army; and the English troops would have been no sooner embarked, than Cadiz must of necessity have fallen, and the affairs of Spain have undergone a favourable change, since the obstacles which they presented were exclusively owing to the proximity of those troops.

At the close of the bad season, Marshal Massena's army had drained the country of its resources without being in a more efficient condition for defeating the English army. He retreated, and was closely pursued by the English, who annoyed him until he reached the frontiers of Spain, after leaving a garrison in Almeida under the orders of General Brenier. He found the troops of Marshal Bessières in readiness to support him,* but had no occasion for their assistance. He brought his army safe back into Spain, and reached Salamanca, from whence he was desirous that the corps of Marshal Ney should march upon Ciudad Rodrigo. This marshal refused to obey; and Massena removed him from the command of the troops, and sent him to Paris. The Emperor gave Ney a gentle scolding; but he always forgave him in consideration of his bravery.

Marshal Massena was afterwards desirous of making a forward movement with his whole army, in order to throw supplies into Almeida; but a concurrence of untoward circum-

* The army of Andalusia had moved to the valley of the Guadiana, and captured Badajoz and Elvas. It was just entering Portugal, but fell back when Marshal Massena commenced his retreat.

stances, and the refractory disposition he met with, would have rendered this a hazardous movement. Nevertheless, preparations were making for carrying it into effect, when General Brenier arrived in person at the head of his garrison, after blowing up the powder magazine of that fortress, and braving the pursuit of all the blockading troops. This bold feat of arms greatly redounded to his honour.

The movement which the army had been ordered to make was rendered superfluous by the arrival of the garrison of Almeida, and it was accordingly countermanded. Thus, therefore, the campaign of Portugal, which had originally promised a definitive result, was only productive of losses and embarrassments.

The army was completely exhausted; and the Emperor conceiving that it stood in need of rest, ordered it into cantonments upon the Douro, and recalled Marshal Massena himself, who was quite exhausted by fatigue, and unable to bestow that attention to his troops which was necessary for restoring them to their former state of efficiency.

He selected for his successor in the command Marshal Marmont, then governor of Illyria, whom he replaced by General Bertrand, now so celebrated by his noble constancy in following the Emperor's fate.

Thus closed the year 1810 in respect to important military operations. The Emperor had determined to send Marmont to Spain, because he felt great confidence in that officer, who was young, and devoured by ambition. He was besides very skilful in establishing an efficient system of organization, acted with great severity, and was always opposed to plunder, which had the effect of making us more enemies than the war itself. The post which Marshal Marmont was about to assume offered him every opportunity of illustrating his fame; and he no doubt entered upon it with the best possible intentions. I am indeed fully convinced, that if fortune had crowned his first efforts, as he was possessed of great personal

merit, he would shortly have become the most useful man for the Emperor's interests in Spain; and this was saying every thing; for it may safely be asserted that the army stood in need of such a man, and that the services of many others might have been dispensed with.

Ill fortune seemed to attach to those who were destined to serve in that country. All were impelled by zeal for the Emperor's service; all were ambitious to please him, and to secure his good graces; and no sooner were the means placed at their command of acquiring glory, and of even obtaining what they had most ardently desired, than they turned their minds to other views. Envy and jealousy had taken up their abode in every breast. A spirit of rivalry prevented those combined movements which would have required the junction of troops formed from the different corps. In the midst of all their misunderstandings, Wellington was invested with an absolute authority over an army accustomed to submission, which he alternately moved upon one or other of our corps, well aware that he had not to apprehend any impediment from the general whose neighbour he was about to attack. It is clear from the boldness of his movements, that he must have been fully sensible of the power which this ground of security placed in his hands.

Marshal Marmont reached Spain, and assumed the command of the troops which Marshal Massena had brought back from Portugal. They were in a deplorable condition on their return from a four months' encampment before the lines of Torres Vedras, in want of every thing, and reduced to the most severe privations. Their only subsistence during that long interval had been solely derived from compulsory requisitions, made and enforced by detachments of troops organised for plundering. Those detachments, which often consisted of a third, or even one half of each regiment, proceeded to a distance of fifteen or twenty leagues, and could only fulfil their mission by exercising acts of severe outrage. A dis-

organization almost unparalleled, confusion and want of discipline were the consequence, and deprived it of the means of contending with the enemy. It had reached Ciudad Rodrigo with scarcely any cavalry, or horses for the artillery, and with its *materiel* in the greatest disorder. The utmost disgust, in short, the most determined spirit of discontent had seized all ranks from the generals to the subaltern officers and soldiers, and had every where taken the place of respect for duty and a love of military glory. The Duke of Ragusa soon triumphed over these difficulties, and raised the fallen courage of his soldiers.

He sent back to France all the generals who were broken down by fatigue or discontented, altered the organization of the several corps, and formed the army into six divisions of infantry and one of cavalry, caused its *materiel* to be completely re-established, had the draft horses better attended to and their numbers increased, formed dépôts of reserve provisions; and in less than three weeks the army was organised anew, restored to its wonted discipline, animated by a proper spirit, and in readiness for active operations. The Emperor far from expecting so prompt a result, had enjoined the Duke of Ragusa not to undertake any operation until his means of action were complete in all parts, and until he should have sixty pieces of cannon with their carriages and ammunition; but the circumstances were of a most pressing nature, and required the adoption of a different course. The siege of Badajoz by the English was vigorously carried on, and drawing to a close; the army under Marshal Soult in the south of Spain had been completely beaten at Albuera, and could no longer undertake any movement. Badajoz could not be saved except by the prompt assistance of the army of Portugal.

The Duke of Ragusa, who was fully sensible of the danger, and who was called to the south by the urgent entreaties of the Duke of Dalmatia, commenced his movement at the begin-

ning of June with thirty thousand infantry, fifteen hundred horse, and thirty-six pieces of cannon. He proceeded in person to Ciudad Rodrigo with a division of infantry and all his cavalry, drove back the English advanced guard which was within reach, and spread the report that he was resuming the offensive. Protected by this movement, the other five divisions advanced in the mean while, by forced marches, towards the Tagus by the Col de Baños; and when the movement was in full operation, the troops which had proceeded in the direction of Ciudad Rodrigo formed the rear guard of the army, and overtook it whilst in the act of crossing the river at Almaraz over a bridge which it had thrown over at that place. As soon as the army reached Estremadura, it formed into platoons, and marched upon Merida in a compact body, and always prepared to fight any portion of the English army which might have pressed upon its flank. This movement was effected with so much decision and promptness that it disconcerted all the enemy's plans, and forced them to raise the siege of Badajoz at the moment when both our armies were forming a junction.

This operation received its due meed of praise and approbation. It was a novel circumstance in Spain to see a French general supporting and relieving his near neighbour, and so far from taking advantage of the instructions which rendered his movements dependent upon the possession of a certain force which it had been found impossible to obtain, incur, on the contrary, the responsibility of a premature offensive movement, and place himself under the orders of one of his equals. It must be acknowledged, to the praise of the Duke of Ragusa, on this occasion, that the glory of the French army, and the public welfare, were the sole motives of his conduct. The example thus held out ought to have served as a lesson to our generals during the remainder of the war in Spain: but self-love resumed the ascendancy, and the Peninsula was lost to us.

Marshals Marmont and Soult agreed upon the ulterior

operations they should adopt, and returned with their troops to their respective quarters.

CHAPTER VII.

Progress of the Papal affairs—Opinion entertained of Pius VII. by his predecessor Pius VI.—His holiness is forcibly carried off—The missionary soldier—Abbé d'Astros—His admissions — Consultation respecting the processional cross—Cardinal di Pietro—The inferior Roman priests.

WHILST the Emperor was urging on the campaign of Portugal, he was not unmindful of the affairs of his own dominions. His discussions with the court of Rome particularly engrossed his attention, and he directed a consultation to be held on the subject by the most celebrated theologians and clergymen in Paris. They unanimously decided against the Pope, whom they accused of exercising his spiritual authority in a matter of a purely temporal nature, with which the church could have no concern.

I have already stated that the disputes with the court of Rome had led to the occupation of Civita-Vecchia and Ancona. The Pope, who pretended that his power was as infallible in a temporal as in a spiritual point of view, protested against the seizure, which had not, however, taken place until after many fruitless representations. Italy, and Rome in particular, had already presented the spectacle of insurrectionary movements; the sanguinary scenes which usually attended them were but too well known, and the Pope's personal character afforded no security against a renewal of them.*

* The opinion entertained of him by his predecessor is well known. Pius VI. was fond of society, and felt a reluctance to enter upon business after dinner. A bishop of the neighbourhood of Rome was one day announced as desirous of

The obstinacy which he displayed made it necessary to adopt measures of aggression. Troops were poured into the city of Rome, to prevent its setting to the provinces the example of a revolt, which there was every reason to apprehend was seriously meditated.

Enraged at such conduct, the Pope, surrounded by priests of narrow understandings, thundered forth his bull of excommunication against the Emperor, and caused it to be circulated in Italy, France, Belgium, and Spain.

Notwithstanding the Emperor's indifference to that excommunication, he nevertheless felt uneasy at the prospect of the embarrassments into which it might involve him, more particularly as it would impose upon him the necessity of acting with severity towards the unfortunate people who might be led astray by some fanatic priests whose influence is always very powerful in the provinces where the population is in a state of ignorance. These ideas assumed the more gloomy aspect as he was then at Vienna, and embarked in a war which might from one moment to another turn against him. If this had come to pass, and the Pope had remained in Rome, it is greatly to be apprehended that the insurrections which would have spread over Italy, where the people were already beginning to rise, would have augmented the difficulties of the Emperor's position at Vienna, and compelled him to con-

having a conversation with him; and the Pope was angry with his attendants for not sparing him the visit of that prelate, whom every one, as well as himself, knew to be a man difficult to persuade, and exceedingly obstinate; but as it was too late to send him back, the Pope ordered that he should be introduced. He had, in fact, come to claim the assistance of his Holiness respecting some discussions which he had with the datary's office concerning a portion of his revenue. His request was granted to him for peace sake; and on his leaving the saloon, the Pope said to the cardinals who were present: 'Gentlemen, if this person should ever become head of the church, you will have fine doings.' The bishop in question was afterwards pope Pius VII. It is even probable that he was chosen by the conclave on account of that character, which was found well calculated to contend with the numberless difficulties that were about to beset the church.

clude a less advantageous peace than he eventually secured. He had unfortunately little leisure to attend to the papal affairs, and had no one then about his person whom he could intrust with their management; his whole attention, therefore, was directed to the object of averting the possible consequences of the Pope's exasperation, which was now at its height, and would set all the engines of his power at work on the first favourable opportunity. He caused him, therefore, to be carried off * and conveyed to Savona, where a suitable establishment had been provided for him. Such was the state of affairs, when they were taken up after the Emperor's marriage, which the cardinals thought fit not to attend; they were blamed by every one, and even condemned by the faculty of theology for acting in this manner.

The Emperor had taken care to have justice and the forms of law on his side, and he trusted to the prospect of eventually removing the prejudices to which the Pope's mind had given way.

He sent him a deputation, composed, in the first instance, of four prelates, who were the Abbé Duvoisin, bishop of Nantes, M. Barral, archbishop of Tours, M. de Beaumont, archbishop of Bourges, and the Bishop of Treves.

The four prelates repaired to Savona, where they stayed nearly a month; they were no doubt provided with answers to all the arguments that might be opposed to them; but their mission had more particularly for its object to come to a definitive arrangement on some points of ecclesiastical discipline, which were in France the subject of unceasing vexations.

The Pope, for instance, refused in his displeasure, to give

* I have already observed that the Emperor did not actually order him to be carried off; he merely wrote on the subject to the King of Naples, who was no less interested in the repose of Italy, and he pointed out by anticipation the case in which such a measure would become necessary. I know not whether it was the King of Naples or the military officer in command at Rome, who took upon himself to act at once as if matters had come to the worst.

bulls to the bishops who were appointed by the Emperor to any vacant sees; the result was, that the vicars capitular were the real bishops, and were almost all in an opposition of principles to the bishop who was sent to them.

The disorganization gradually extended to religious houses, and was beginning to reach the houses of education; in many parishes, no apprehension was felt for the consequences of refusing to sing the *Domine Salvum* after mass.

I was never made acquainted with the details of the conferences at Savona; but I heard from one of the respectable prelates who had been a member of the deputation, that the Pope had not swerved from the idea which exclusively possessed his mind; he insisted upon returning to Rome, and confined himself to this answer, *a Roma, a Roma,* in reply to every observation made to him; which was as much as to say that his temporal power should first be restored to him, and he would then consider what was proper for him to do. In vain were the interests of the faithful, and the repose of the state, represented to him; the burthen of his song was always, *a Roma;* he never departed from that point.

He observed, however, that he could not give any reply without consulting his council, or the cardinals whom I have just named; but with them we had a very different account to settle. Before entering upon this topic, I must finish what relates to Savona.

The prelates, being unable to obtain any thing, took leave of the Pope, and returned to Paris.

It is a remarkable circumstance that, in a case in which the strongest mind might err, and the best memory be at fault, in a case which had challenged the inquiries of the most learned theologians, and caused so many books to be referred to for the last six months, the Pope confined himself to reading his breviary, and counting his beads. He never opened a book; and it will shortly be seen in what manner he spent his time.

The Emperor was much disappointed at the return of the bishops to Paris; he again reflected, and held a consultation on the subject matter of a second message, which was sent to the Pope during the winter. The bearers of it were the same bishops as before, to which two others were added; the Archbishop of Mechlin, and, I believe, M. d'Osmond, who was bishop of Nancy, or archbishop of Florence; I do not exactly recollect which of the two sees he occupied.

This affair of the Pope, in which such gratuitous injustice was shown to the Emperor, is, in my opinion, one of the circumstances in which he displayed the greatest degree of patience. If the Pope had been in contact with a king of England, or an emperor of Russia, he would not have given a moment's uneasiness; but such was the virulence of animosity against the Emperor, that atheists took part for the holy father with as much warmth as devotees themselves.

It will now be seen how far the patience of the Emperor was carried, and what knowledge he had of the secret machinations of the Roman priesthood, when he sent a second message to Savona.

This was the first time in which I had any thing to do with priests. I was almost certain of succeeding in what I was about to undertake; for I had sent into different parts of France some priests devoted to my interests; and the greater part brought me back word that what was called the *petite église* had a predominating influence almost everywhere. The name of *petite église* was given to that church which was attended by priests who rejected the pope's authority, and whose avowed sentiments were, nevertheless, in accordance with those contained in the bull of excommunication. Ever since the civil war, some of those priests were known to travel all over France, administering the sacraments of baptism, confession, and communion; celebrating marriages and divine service in private houses, to which their flocks would each repair with their little contributions; and this was to them the

main point; for whilst abusing the credulity of the country people, those fanatics were not unmindful of the object of raising a tax upon them.

The Duke of Otranto had wholly neglected this source of discord, which had already created great mischief when I gave my attention to it.

I had succeeded in causing the arrest of many of those priests who, since 1793, had been sent into the western provinces by the committee of bishops established in London, and who, ever after that period, were acting in France the part which was least expected from men of their profession.

I sent for these priests, who were absolute idiots, and determined to suffer martyrdom for trifles; I could obtain from them no avowal of any thing but what related to themselves personally; such as that they re-administered the sacraments of baptism, confession, marriage, &c. to those country people who had been attended by such of the clergy as had acknowledged the *concordat*. In the search after those priests, a soldier was arrested, who, perceiving the stupidity of his neighbours, had taken it into his head to pass himself off for a priest; he had travelled, and received a good education, and accordingly set about confessing, baptizing, and saying mass; a trade much more lucrative to him than that of a soldier.

He was thrown into prison, but no harm was done to him; the report, however, of this adventure was injurious to the true priests of the *petite église*, every one being afraid of hearing a soldier's mass. I was the more pleased at the occurrence, as it proved of essential service to me.

The Emperor had often mentioned the *petite église* to me, and strongly urged me not to relax in my inquiries; he was greatly pleased at this early success, which I have noticed previously to relating the following circumstance, though totally unconnected with it.

The Emperor had an extraordinary talent for discovering the source from whence emanated any influence detrimental

to his interests; he seldom erred when he relied upon his own impressions. He had, three months before, directed me to be on the look-out for a bull or instruction which the Pope was understood to have circulated amongst the French clergy.

There was a moral proof of its existence; the very clauses of it were found to be actually in practice; but the great difficulty was to lay hands upon it. The physiognomy of priests is generally apt to deceive: I should have failed in my researches, had it not been for a casual occurrence, which led to a full discovery of the matter.

We had reached the 1st of January, when the constituted bodies came to pay their respects to the Emperor.

The clergy of Paris presented themselves at the audience. The see of this metropolis had been held, since the death of Cardinal Dubelloy, by Cardinal Fesch, who had afterwards tendered his resignation, and been succeeded by Cardinal Maury; but as this prelate was without any bull of investiture, the vicars capitular of the chapter performed all the duties belonging to the diocese. It was necessary, therefore, to seek amongst them for what it was wished to discover; there was, in fact, some probability that an agent of the court of Rome had applied to Abbé Maury, who maintained, however, an opinion contrary to that court. Abbé d'Astros,* one of the vicars of the chapter of Paris, was the principal agent of the metropolitan chapter; he was present with the clergy of the diocese, and himself uttered the complimentary expressions addressed by the deputation to the Emperor, who listened patiently to it, and afterwards spoke to him with great composure respecting the dissensions of the clergy.

I cannot take upon myself to say whether the Emperor already possessed any positive information. If so, I did not furnish it. Certain it is that he had touched the tender part.

* He had been placed in the diocese of Paris by the worthy father of the present M. Portalis.

He brought the conversation home to M. d'Astros, who was at a loss to understand why the Emperor so pointedly selected him. He thought himself betrayed, and took the alarm, without, however, uttering a single word that was calculated to compromise him.

At the conclusion of this audience, which was soon over, the Emperor returned to his closet, where he desired me to follow him; and after telling me what had taken place between him and the abbé, and what were his own misgivings on the subject, he desired me to follow up the business. Not a moment was to be lost: every one was retiring from the palace, when it occurred to me to send Cardinal Maury word that I wished to have a conversation with him, and requested he would call upon me on leaving the Tuileries, and contrive to bring Abbé d'Astros along with him.

I returned home, and sent a very dexterous agent to M. d'Astros, desiring him not to lose a moment, to visit every corner of his apartment, and not to overlook any thing that was likely to contain a single sheet of paper.

Whilst my order was carrying into effect, Cardinal Maury and M. d'Astros arrived; the latter still alarmed at the questions put by the Emperor to him. I assumed the air of a man who was already well-informed of every thing; which was by no means the case. I told M. d'Astros that I allowed him half an hour to decide upon telling me from whence he had received the papers which had just been found at his house, and to what purpose he intended them. He hoped to elude my inquiry by replying that he did not intend to make any use of them, and that he was not acquainted with the name of the person who had brought them to him. This answer put me quite at my ease; for I never knew before that he had any papers. I took advantage of this communicative disposition, and got him to name the persons to whom he had shown the papers. He at first refused to name any one; when he was told to be on his

guard, as he could only have been brought into his present position by some one who had a knowledge of every thing; and it was clear that something must have been disclosed, since a clue had been afforded for discovering the object sought for. He then named a vicar capitular of his own diocese, and M. Portalis,* a disclosure which greatly indisposed the Emperor towards this counsellor of state, who being intrusted with a secret, the tendency of which was to disturb the public tranquillity, had neglected to divulge it. He was the more hurt at this conduct, as he could not forget the father's services; and if he made a severe example of the son, by dismissing him from the council of state, he did it much more with the view of setting an example than as a punishment for the error.

M. d'Astros refused to make any farther disclosure. I was then put into possession of the result of the domiciliary visit made at his residence; where, in fact, very extraordinary papers had been found. M. d'Astros admitted that they belonged to him; but he was not aware that they were not in my possession at the time of my sending for him.

There were amongst his papers many private letters, of which I compelled him to name the authors. When he had complied with my wishes, I declared to him that he could not be set at liberty until I was informed of every thing.

These papers, though rather voluminous, had been found concealed partly in the pockets of an old cassock, which was hung up in his wardrobe, and partly in a muff-box. They consisted of the famous bull, and of a lengthy instruction from a pope's legate. We thereby ascertained that, on quitting Rome, the Pope had left his powers to a priest, who issued his mandates to the whole of Christianity, and whose orders were implicitly obeyed. The existence of this invisible chief explained to us how it happened that we had every

* The present minister.

where to encounter a uniform system of opposition and malignity on certain points of discipline and dogma.

M. d'Astros obstinately refused to state from whom emanated the instruction, which was without any signature; but it was accompanied by minutes of letters written in his own hand, which afforded proof of his having had to consult some chief on different points of ecclesiastical discipline, no doubt with a view of screening himself from responsibility.

Unfortunately for him, he had written to that chief to know whether he could conduct the chapter to the Emperor with the cross elevated; that is to say, with the cross which takes the lead in every procession.

He earnestly solicited an early reply, because Cardinal Maury, who went frankly to work, insisted upon its being carried; and M. d'Astros, who was apprehensive of incurring censure, wanted to consult his chief previously to giving his assent. The reply of that chief was also to be found amongst the papers which had been seized. It was even accompanied by an explanation, which must have been preceded by questions and replies, so closely following each other, that the chief was evidently at no great distance. His writing and style farther disclosed that he was an Italian: but M. d'Astros would never consent to name him.

I resorted to a stratagem for discovering who he was. As the letters were only dated two or three days back, I ascertained from the servant of M. d'Astros that he had carried them to one Father Fontana, an Italian, who, since the expulsion of the cardinals, had retired to a convent of nuns in Paris. I sent for this friar, who named another, also a native of Italy. The latter, I think, was called Antonio; and had also retired at the same period to a community of nuns, the name of which has escaped my recollection.

Father Fontana admitted the letters written to him by M. d'Astros, of which I showed him the copies, as well as his replies annexed to them.

To avoid details which would be tedious for the reader, suffice it to state, as the result of the admissions of these priests, that ever since the cardinals had been removed from Paris, they had themselves decided every difficult point in church matters, in pursuance of an instruction similar to the one found amongst the papers of Abbé d'Astros. They said that they had received that instruction since the Pope was at Savona, but not from himself.

These priests had excited my curiosity without gratifying it, when it occurred to me to ask how they would have acted had any case presented itself which was not provided for by their instruction; one of dogma, for instance, instead of one of mere discipline. They replied, that they would have referred it to the college of cardinals; and finished by acknowledging that such a case had actually happened, and they had written to Cardinal di Pietro respecting it.

Cardinal di Pietro was the Pope's prime-minister: the Pope had confided his powers to him on quitting Rome; and he was the person who, when in Paris, had prevented the other cardinals from attending the ceremony of the Emperor's marriage.

He had been banished from Paris with the other cardinals, and was then at Semur in Burgundy, where I sent for him. He was closely questioned by M. Real, to whom the Emperor had directed me to confide the farther management of the business. Cardinal di Pietro was obliged to acknowledge every thing, that he performed the Pope's functions, and on leaving Paris had given his instructions to the two Italian priests and to M. d'Astros for their guidance.

Thus it was that the ministers of a God of peace took advantage of their profession to disturb the state and the privacy of every family, by alarming the consciences of honest men, and encouraging those who wavered in their evil designs. In every other country but France the government would have punished those priests as enemies to the public tranquil-

lity. They were merely confined as dangerous madmen. The farther proceedings in this affair led to the discovery of a line of correspondence between Paris and Savona, and to the consequent imprisonment of some priests who were the bearers of it,* and who carried to the very extremities of Belgium the democratical instructions of Cardinal di Pietro.

This discovery gave me the idea of proceeding on the look-out for all the inferior Roman priests who had come to Paris in the train of the cardinals; and I found the greater part of them habited in a secular dress, and teaching Latin, Italian, or music. The devotees had vied with each other in showing them every attention.

I caused them to be strictly watched, and soon found that their morals were greatly relaxed, and that it was dangerous for families to give admission to men of such perverse morals, who profited of the free access they had obtained to introduce a species of immorality until then unknown in France. Some of those families, however, had no right to complain of them; for they had, as it were, courted the evil, out of pure party spirit.

Nevertheless, I made no stir in the business, but collected the treasonable letters which some of these hypocrites had written to young men, and I communicated their contents to the parents of the latter. This precaution was sufficient to procure their early dismissal, with a few exceptions, and they ceased from thenceforward to be dangerous men. This affair of the priests was of essential service to the administration in general, because the mischief which is known is at all times less to be apprehended than that which is concealed. Means were found to arrest the consequences of it; and if, during the last twelve months that this criminal intrigue was at work, it had been interrupted in its progress, it would not have done

* M. Franchet, the ex-director of the police, was arrested as being one of these messengers. He was then employed in one of the government-offices at Lyons, and added to his emolument the fees which these journeys procured to him.

all that mischief in France which proved so detrimental to us in our reverse of fortune.

A colouring of oppression was given to the measures resorted to for repressing this intrigue. May I not ask, what would be done in England to a Roman Catholic bishop who, in virtue of secret powers from the Pope, should use the sacredness of his calling to foment in the kingdom a system of intrigue calculated to throw the country into a state of confusion?

CHAPTER VIII.

Arrival of a young Saxon in Paris—His intention to assassinate the Emperor—Remarkable determination of that prince—M. Daunou's book—What might have been the fate of France.

THE Emperor's kindness even towards his personal enemies was always carried to excess. I will cite an instance of it which came under my own observation, and occurred immediately after this affair of the priesthood.

I was informed in the course of the winter that a family of great distinction in Dresden felt extremely uneasy at the resolution formed by a young man of twenty years of age, connected with it by the ties of relationship, who had suddenly left the university of Halle or of Leipsic, where he was prosecuting his studies, and had taken his passport for Frankfort on the Maine, from whence he would probably penetrate into France.

I was also informed that this young man was very light-headed, and had quitted the Lutheran creed to embrace the Catholic religion.

The notice given was short, and the information extremely vague. I should have failed to make any discovery had not

one of my agents written by the same courier to apprise me of the passage through that town of a young Saxon named Wondersale, on his way to Paris. He added that the Saxon had taken up at Frankfort a letter of credit upon Paris.

I could plainly see that he distorted the name of the young man, who, according to my calculation, must have been two days in Paris; and I caused every search to be made after him by the prefecture, as well as by the ministry of police.

I issued this order on a Sunday morning, at the hour of ten; and ordered an application to be made to all the banking-houses which were understood to correspond with Germany, for the names of all those in whose favour they had been directed to open a credit for the last five or six days.

I was immediately furnished with a list of names; and remarked, amongst the rest, the German name of Von der Sulhn, having a credit from Frankfort of such a date, with the name of the street and hotel where he was to be found.

He was accordingly met at his hotel towards five o'clock in the evening of the same day. Four pair of pistols and a dagger were discovered in his apartment; and he had confessed himself, and received the sacrament.

When he entered my apartment, I was much more disposed, as I looked at his handsome countenance, to speak to him of balls and amusements, than of more serious matters.

I had, besides, nothing but suspicion to act upon, and was forced to assume a disguise in order to get at the truth. I spoke morality to the young man; and forcibly dwelt upon the irreparable disgrace which attended a wicked action, especially when committed by a person of his distinguished birth. He coloured, became embarrassed, and with that candour of mind which indicates innocence from guilt, he at last acknowledged what had been his intention in coming to Paris. He had resolved to kill the Emperor, in order, by coupling their names together, to immortalise his own. I asked him how it happened that he was not arrested by the difficulties which

he must have foreseen, and of which he now had a clear proof. He calmly replied, that whether he succeeded or not, he knew that his own death was certain; that he had prepared himself to render an account of his actions to God; and that if he had missed his aim, another would have followed his example; and by profiting of the experience which had been wanting to him, would avoid the obstacles in the way of success.

He added, that Henry IV. had been missed on twenty-two occasions; but the twenty-third attempt was successful. The Emperor had only been missed three or four times: this failure was not enough to arrest a man of courage, who only reckoned his life as of any value so long as he could render it useful: his own life would have been sufficiently well employed, in so far as it would have promoted, by one more chance, the probabilities of success for those who might wish to tread in his footsteps.

It was difficult to carry to greater lengths than this young man had done the readiness to sacrifice one's self in order to commit a criminal action.

I made a written report to the Emperor of whatever had preceded and followed the arrest of the young Saxon, whose intentions admitted no longer of any doubt.

The Emperor wrote in the margin of my report, by the hand of his secretary —"This affair must be kept concealed, in order to avoid the necessity of publicly following it up. The young man's age must be his excuse: none are criminal at so early an age, unless regularly trained to crime. In a few years his turn of mind will alter; and vain would then be the regret of having sacrificed a young madman, and plunged a worthy family into a state of mourning, to which some dishonour would always be attached.

"Confine him in the castle of Vincennes; have him treated with all the care which his derangement seems to require; give him books to read; let his family be written to, and

leave it to time to do the rest. Speak on the subject with the arch-chancellor, whose advice will be of great assistance to you."

In consequence of these orders, young Von der Sulhn was placed at Vincennes, where he was still confined on the arrival of the allies in Paris.

The misconduct of the Roman priests, which had forced itself upon the Emperor's notice, was not calculated to induce him to relax in his project of shaking off the papal yoke. On this occasion, he caused a work to be composed by M. Daunou,* which had for its title, "*Historical Remarks on the Encroachments and the Temporal Power of the Popes.*" He said, in speaking of them—"I should much rather turn Lutheran to-morrow, than set France again on fire, by restoring in our country the truly monstrous power of those hypocrites."

The Emperor entered unfortunately too much into the details of petty affairs, which it had become a practice to communicate to him. His ministry was less attentive to business than formerly; the most insignificant points in those affairs caused a reference to be made to him: he was thus often called away from serious occupations, to dwell upon trifles which ought never to have been mentioned to him until the business had been fully gone through. He was, therefore, unable to attach to matters of moment that importance which they demanded; and lesser matters, on the contrary, grew into undeserved importance.

If the Emperor had not been called away to subjects which engrossed his whole attention, he would have terminated the papal affairs in such a manner, that the result would have been ranked amongst the most useful labours of his administration; but owing to the business having been left in an incom-

* M. Daunou was a member of the Institute, and head of the department of the archives.

plete state, has been represented as an enterprise altogether tyrannical in its nature: whilst every Catholic country would have acknowledged its debt of gratitude to him, had his views been carried into effect. It was much to be regretted that an uninterrupted series of important wars brought on a never-ending succession of embarrassments, and withdrew the Emperor from those occupations on which he had so fully set his mind.

During the interval from the peace of Luneville to the rupture of the peace of Amiens, there was a period when the budget of receipts exceeded the expenditure by upwards of forty or fifty millions of francs; and when the Emperor had besides, in his own coffers, a saving derived from foreign contributions and from his personal economy, which did not fall short of two hundred and fifty or three hundred millions.

If with this had been coupled the blessing of peace, there was wherewith to render France a spacious museum of every thing that ingenuity and art are capable of inventing for the glory and happiness of mankind. We might lose ourselves in gloomy reflections, which are not the object contemplated in this work, if we opened a chapter of what has been wrongfully done, and of what ought to have been done, but was wholly neglected.

Whilst the police of Paris was unravelling the evil machinations of the priesthood, the Emperor was sending his second message to the Pope: it was as unsuccessful as the first; and it may boldly be asserted, that the Pope possessed a mind which was, in every point of view, inadequate to the situation in which the march of human reason had thrown the affairs of the church. He only contemplated his own personal situation, and obstinately refused to separate it from the spiritual question. The course of events came to favour his views: the conclave may perhaps canonise him; but history will pass judgment on his deserts.

CHAPTER IX.

Unfavourable situation of commerce—The Emperor comes to its assistance—Difficulties of M. de Talleyrand—Sale of his hotel—How he furnished the one he inhabits at present—Deposit made by the Duke of Otranto—M. Lafitte—His ideas regarding the continental system.

It was at the commencement of this winter that several banking and mercantile houses fell into difficulties, which were only occasioned by the embarrassments of their correspondents, whose affairs had suffered in consequence of their resistance to the measures attempted to be levelled at the commerce of England. In Holland, the principal houses were winding up their affairs, and discontinuing them altogether. In Belgium, a system of extensive fraud had been discovered, which had assumed the character of a tolerated traffic. Not only was it arrested in its progress, but a rigid investigation had been made of the books of every commercial house which had embarked in it, and they had been fined the whole amount of the duties of which they had evaded the payment. This discovery brought on the ruin of many who had sold their merchandise, in consequence of the facilities they had found for introducing them; but it did no injury to the English houses, which were already reimbursed of what had been owing to them.

These measures had had the effect of causing considerable alarm: each one contracted the sphere of his business; capitalists withdrew their funds; and there was a moment when some houses of great respectability stood in need of money, although their stores were full of goods, because they could not find a vent for them.

The Emperor ordered several reports to be made to him on the subject of those commercial difficulties; and they all

came to the conclusion, that the greater part of the merchants involved had not fallen into them in consequence of the withdrawing of the capitals intrusted to their management, but owing to their having given to their operations an extension wholly disproportioned to their means, and of having been accordingly compelled to increase those means, by creating circulating notes, the payment of which was not secured by any real capital; a discredit which had thus occasioned their embarrassment. Nevertheless, he came forward to the assistance of all, and threw open his coffers. He advanced them six or seven millions of francs, out of his own savings, in order to spare the commercial men of Paris, and of many other large towns, from the catastrophe which threatened them.

This was the first time of my having any intercourse with M. Lafitte, whom I had never yet been acquainted with, and who had been a long time at the head of M. Perregaux's bank, particularly since the illness of the latter, which ended in his death.

The Emperor had often spoken in my presence of the commercial crisis: it had even been the subject of a discussion in the council of state; and I could easily perceive that the Emperor's language was in conformity with the reports he had received from various quarters, though none of them had carried conviction to his mind. I also perceived that when I was maintaining a discussion with my colleague, M. Mollien, the minister of the treasury, who sat by my side, the Emperor looked at me as if to spur me on. He was nevertheless aware that I was a perfect stranger to those matters; and I was apprehensive, for a moment, lest he should endeavour to persuade Mollien that I was the author of the reports. I therefore introduced in the discussion some ridiculous remark, which had the effect of repairing my character. I was satisfied, however, that the Emperor's look had some meaning in it; and as I was long aware of his preferring that his thoughts should be guessed, than that he should be called

upon to explain them, I set myself to work as soon as I left the council.

I had kept up a friendly intercourse with Bourrienne: the Emperor knew it, and took pleasure in listening to whatever I had to say, when an opportunity offered for mentioning him; and I thus retained the hope of eventually procuring him a fresh appointment.

Bourrienne knew better than I did the meaning of the Emperor's look; and I fancied for a moment that he had some knowledge of the reports which had engaged the Emperor's attention. After conversing with Bourrienne, I determined to seek some information from M. Lafitte, whose opinion in the commercial world was already of so much the greater value, as it rested upon the high independence of his personal character, the true origin of that consideration entertained for him, which has gone on increasing and strengthening itself by successive events.

A case of arbitration, in which I felt much interested, and wished to have M. Lafitte's opinion, served as a colourable pretence for requesting him, through Bourrienne, to favour me with a call.

I had three points to discuss with him: first, the commercial crisis, with its causes and effects; secondly, the continental system; and, in the third place, the issuing of licenses.

On listening to M. Lafitte, I imbibed, by degrees, his own opinions; and if he should read my work, he will be enabled to judge if I have correctly retained them in my memory.

I had several conversations with him, wherein he fully developed his opinion, which I now submit to the reader's attention.

"Governments," he said, "may lay down an infallible rule for forming a correct judgment of the progress of affairs and of public opinion, by considering that whatever is opposed to the interests of the community is necessarily also in opposition to their affections. An arbitrary conduct on the part

of the administration destroys confidence and credit. A system of blockade is productive of no present good effect; and its natural consequence is to destroy all future commercial advantages. Commerce is quite inoffensive in its nature: it is friendly to, because it needs the protection of government: it never assumes a character of opposition, except when it is exposed to vexatious proceedings, and possesses no guarantees for its stability. Those who can only prosper by the prevalence of order and tranquillity can never be desirous of revolutions.

"The continental blockade is at first sight a mighty thought. Its theory presents to the mind a result as prompt as it is brilliant; but the flights of imagination are inapplicable to practical cases: the possibility of carrying the contemplated measure into effect is the first thing to be attended to. Some manufacturers may rejoice at the stimulus which that measure has given to their branch of industry; but the great body of mercantile men can only suffer from a commerce which is only carried on by means of licenses; and statesmen see in it nothing else than a concession made to the English of the commerce of the whole world.

"There can be no advantage in deceiving by empty words: flattery may please the common run of princes; but truth alone is becoming the Emperor's genius. He ought therefore to be told, that the blockade is a system of watchfulness extended over the continent, and not over England: the continent alone is prevented from sending a ship to sea.

"The question being thus laid down, what will be the result of such a state of things? England will lose all the continental consumers; and the rest of the world will become tributaries to her undisputed monopoly: the continent, on the contrary, will supply its own wants without the intervention of England, and will be precluded from exchanging its productions with the rest of the world. The question is, whether the European continent will of itself sufficiently compen-

sate for every other portion of the globe? This would have to be maturely considered, if the blockade could be rendered effectual; but the licenses which are actually granted sufficiently prove that the question admits of a very different solution.

"France, which is a manufacturing country, will benefit by our expelling the English from the different markets of Europe; and this is her only compensation for the loss she must suffer by the cessation of all intercourse with America, Africa, and India. But what advantages will be derived by Spain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia, from such a system? The existing state of things can only be productive of injury to them. How then can such an unnatural fabric rest upon any durable foundation?

"The complaints of subjects are not wholly without an influence over their respective governments, when they are founded on justice: they yield for a time to necessity; but there is a re-action of interests, and those interests become so clamorous that they must needs be attended to.

"Viewing, then, the question in this light, Monseigneur, every European power, however it may be ostensibly with us, is our secret enemy, and at heart the friend of England. Without keeping up any mutual intercourse, they understand each other, and will not fail to break out on the first favourable opportunity. Russia, in particular, which is the most powerful and the most aggrieved, ought to inspire us with such an apprehension, because she is unable to abide by the promises she has made: for my part, I am fully convinced that nothing can make up to her for the loss of English commerce. The losses felt by Russia are enormous; and they fall upon the high nobility, and not upon the people. The nobility fill the court and the army; and a single fact will prove to you what are their intentions. Previously to the blockade, the *ruble* was worth three francs; it is now scarcely worth twenty sols.

"This consideration of existing difficulties must make us cast an anxious glance at futurity. The north hitherto supplied timber, hemp, and the most essential articles for raising a navy: the English are now driven to the necessity of seeking for them in America. When new habits are thus contracted, they are never laid aside.

"Even the power of genius, Monseigneur, must bend to the force of circumstances; the *licenses* are proofs against the wisdom of the system: nothing violent can possess any durability. Thus, therefore, the *blockade* has already been destroyed by the *licenses:* the licenses have done no more than to establish a privilege in commerce; and the tendency of this privilege is to secure an advantage to the English. Possessed as they are of every market, they alone have a right to purchase and sell; they refuse our goods, and force upon us the produce of India and America. We pay, for instance, six francs for sugar, which they purchase for eight or nine sols at most!

"You must perceive that what is particularly evident in all this is the enormous profit derived by England. A few privileged merchants secure some gain to themselves by acting the part of intermediate agents; but they obtain it from the consumer, and not at all from England: and be it always borne in mind, that this consumer is a Frenchman.

"This system of licenses cannot deceive any one; it strikes at the respectability of commerce by the frauds and impositions which are its necessary attendants; it discontents allies and natives indiscriminately, by compelling them to pay three or four times the value of the goods.

"You are well aware that our exports do not tend to diminish the tribute thus paid to England; almost every article of which they consist are stated at an extravagant price, and put on board our ships for no other purpose than to be thrown into the sea. It would be better to keep them for the benefit of the poor. Be this as it may, every thing can

be summed up in a few words: the blockade and the licenses come to this: the English sell every thing to the continent, without purchasing any goods in return. Having the terms of purchase in another quarter, and of sale with us at their own option, they realise a double profit, without encountering the slightest opposition. France, on the contrary, manufactures to no purpose, since her goods are often doomed to destruction. She may, indeed, gain some profit from foreigners, by reselling to them the imported produce; but those foreigners are our own allies, and the blockade thus presses with additional weight upon them. They lose upon their goods, for which they can find no purchaser; and they lose upon colonial produce, which they can only procure from ourselves.

"Such a state of things cannot last. Prussia, Austria, and Russia will, in their turn, insist upon granting licenses. The English are aware that our allies are well inclined towards them, and they will not reject any friendly offer: discontent and reproaches will soon break out; the blockade will become a mere name; our allies will, in spite of us, draw nearer to our enemies; and fresh wars will, perhaps, again place our future prospects in jeopardy.

"So long as peace shall be indefinitely postponed, the country cannot well prosper, nor can confidence exist. Glory alone is not sufficient for a nation. The Emperor's share of it is imperishable; but we naturally desire to see general happiness and tranquillity in its train.

"The blockade, therefore, as I have already stated, is viewed by statesmen as a gigantic and bold project, but which can never be attended with success. The system of licenses, the main object of which is to exchange manufactured goods, which we have largely accumulated, against the articles of primary necessity we stand so much in need of—that system was a just one: it has, however, degenerated by a series of abuses into a disgraceful privilege. Those alone

who obtain licenses have an interest in applauding the measure.

"Let us not deceive ourselves: it is not this transitory evil of a blockade which spreads alarm and discouragement. The Emperor is possessed of the genius and knowledge which give him the power to conciliate every thing. The evil proceeds, perhaps, from some unfair prejudices instilled into his mind during his first campaigns. Judging of the mass by the exceptions, he perhaps confounds the financier with the farmer of public revenues, and the merchant with certain contractors. This is, no doubt, the origin of the arbitrary measures of the administration: the breach of promises is placed, by a species of reprisals, as a set-off against fraudulent acts; and good faith, which infuses a vital spirit wherever it has any influence, is nowhere found to exist.

"The comparative state of French and English credit is a humiliating fact, which may serve as a key to many others. The English debt amounts to eighteen or nineteen thousand millions of francs; ours is only twelve hundred or thirteen hundred millions; and yet the English would be enabled, in case of need, to borrow much larger sums than what we could obtain upon credit; and above all, they could borrow on much more advantageous terms. Whence arises this difference? Why is the credit of the state at a lower ebb in France than that of the principal bankers and merchants, whilst the reverse is invariably the case in England? The problem may be solved in a few words. In England, a sure way to recover lost credit is to transact business with the government: a similar course in France never fails to destroy private credit. England may be taken in the mass for a vast commercial concern, the partners of which are the ministers, the laws its partnership contract, which defies the attack of power. With us, on the contrary, the Council of State usurps the authority of the tribunals; and I might almost venture to assert, that

nothing useful is carried into effect, because nothing rests upon a solid guarantee."

M. Lafitte afterwards discussed at great length the causes and effects of the crisis, which he neither found to originate in the consequences of the blockade, nor in some wild gambling speculations. He supported his reasoning by facts, and explained to me the measures which ought to be adopted, in order that government might be enabled to wield all its power, by taking advantage of the prodigious means at its command; and, as he spoke, I felt myself carried along with him by the soundness of his reasoning. I will not endeavour to relate his arguments, because I might not state them with sufficient accuracy, and there is no longer a question of putting them in practice. As I was desirous, however, of bestowing all my attention to the subject, and was unable to do so at that moment, I resolved to see him again; and resolved for the present, from all I had learned, to exert all my influence in order to prevail on the Emperor to grant the immediate assistance which several commercial establishments had prayed for.

This assistance was only considered by M. Lafitte in the light of a palliative remedy, which did not at all remove the main objections to the system pursued. Nevertheless, he highly applauded it; and the temporary advantages which he anticipated from thence, and actually developed to me, explained the meaning of a multitude of reports, which daily reached my ears, and were wrapped up in the language of mysterious hints.

These conversations with M. Lafitte having made me better acquainted with our existing condition, I requested he would commit his sentiments to paper. He yielded to my request, and I handed his note to the Emperor. One of his ministers having accidentally made a report to him on the same day, concerning the prohibitory measures adopted, the

Emperor grew angry, and said in full council, "With all your measures, you destroy the commerce of France."

Subsequently to this circumstance he evinced great readiness to afford aid to all establishments of undoubted respectability, which had felt the effects of the crisis. The applications for money became at last so frequent, as to make him deeply reflect on our condition. He had an opportunity of discovering the correctness of M. Lafitte's opinions when he saw M. Oberkam, the manufacturer, on the eve of a bankruptcy. He sent for him, and desired he would draw all the money he stood in need of to prevent such a misfortune, and to enable his manufactories to proceed. His liberality prevented the failure of that house.

The first Paris establishment which was under the necessity of soliciting assistance was the firm of Tourton-Ravel. It was certainly not justified in relying upon the Emperor's bounty, considering its conduct towards him in the affair of General Morean: nevertheless, it had not to wait twenty-four hours for the relief applied for; and became indebted for the loan of a large sum, for the reimbursement of which it entered into such arrangements with the minister of the treasury as suited its own convenience. I was the person to whom M. Tourton came to confide his embarrassment, delivering into my hands at the same time a letter for the Emperor; and my only reason for naming him is, that he was yet indebted a considerable portion of the money when he showed himself conspicuous amongst those who brought about the Emperor's downfall at the period of the first occupation of Paris.

The firm of Simon became bankrupt at the time of the crisis above-mentioned, and applied for assistance, which was refused, because it did not offer any adequate moral guarantee for the repayment. By the disaster which befell that house, M. de Talleyrand, according to what was reported to me at

the time, lost fourteen hundred thousand francs. His affairs were then in a very indifferent state, and his revenue was hardly sufficient to pay the interest of the money owing to his creditors. He became reduced to the allowance made to him by the Emperor, and had the mortification of being hard pressed by creditors, who, being likewise in want of money, threatened to bring an action against him. I had to interfere, in order to prevent a publicity, which would have been wholly unexampled for a man of his rank. He was compelled to borrow a hundred thousand crowns from a banking-house, which soon afterwards failed. His situation was truly deplorable: he came to explain it to me, and to request I would prevail on the Emperor to purchase his residence, formerly the hotel of Valentinois in the Rue de Varennes.

The Emperor had no reason to be pleased with him. Public report had ascribed to M. de Talleyrand many expressions injurious to the character of the sovereign. He may never have uttered them; but, if they were not to be visited upon him, neither was there any motive for affording him relief.

The Emperor was, however, reluctant that a man who had been of service to him should remain in so painful a situation; and although he had no occasion for the hotel of Valentinois, he caused it to be visited and estimated by M. Fontaine, the architect of the palaces of the Tuileries, the Louvre, St. Cloud, &c. The architect named by M. de Talleyrand drew up a counter estimate on behalf of his employer, and upon their report the Emperor purchased the hotel ready furnished, and paid for it the sum of two millions one hundred thousand francs in ready money.

Notwithstanding this sale, M. de Talleyrand removed as much of the furniture as he was enabled to find room for in the new hotel he had purchased at the corner of the Rue St. Florentin. He transacted on that occasion a business of a double nature with equal satisfaction to himself, because the new hotel belonged to the former Spanish ambassador, with

whom M. de Talleyrand had an account to settle. He received the hotel in lieu of a sum of money which he might not have been able to recover until its sale should have been effected.

I mention this anecdote, because the Emperor was accused of having seized upon M. de Talleyrand's hotel after he had completely fitted it up. I ask every man of sense if any one would have been found to pay two millions one hundred thousand francs for a house which M. de Talleyrand was anxious to dispose of? and whether the Emperor, who was at a loss what to do with it after effecting the purchase, could be influenced by any other motive than a desire to assist M. de Talleyrand by taking it off his hands?

At this period I also witnessed another proof of the Emperor's kindness, which was evinced towards a person who has probably been in ignorance of it, as I was desired not to mention the subject. Many circumstances now justify me in divulging the secret. When M. Fouché quitted the ministry of police, he was possessed of considerable sums of money, and did so little justice to the Emperor as to feel apprehensive of their being taken from him: he had placed a greater reliance in the honesty of a mere agent of police, named Dupont, or Dumont, one of his dependents. At the moment of his taking his departure for Italy, he intrusted that agent with a large sum of money, of which he never could recover back any portion. This agent died soon afterwards, leaving a widow and two children in a state of absolute want. This woman being ignorant of what had passed between M. Fouché and her husband, it was natural for her to expect the production of a receipt which she might well suppose her husband to have given for the money deposited in his hands. Had she done so, it would have been impossible, in the absence of any receipt, to make her restore the money which she found at her husband's death, especially as the claimants were desirous of avoiding the publicity which the transaction would necessarily create.

I was informed of the fact by some of M. Fouché's friends, and had an opportunity the same night of mentioning it to the Emperor, who ordered me to exert every means in my power to secure M. Fouché from all loss. I had no difficulty in accomplishing that object, as the widow was an honest woman, who restored the deposit on the first application made to her. Nevertheless, Madame Fouché, who had not followed her husband to Italy, and who was a lady of sound sense, was too well aware of the danger he had incurred not to be deeply sensible of the kind intentions manifested by the Emperor on the occasion. She came to request I would solicit an audience of the Emperor on her behalf. It was granted, and she did not fail to return him her grateful acknowledgment for so signal a mark of favour.

CHAPTER X.

Czernitchef—His attempts at bribery—The teacher of mathematics—Reflections on the system of spying—Article in the *Journal de l'Empire*—Sharp reprimand—Retirement of the Duke of Cadore—M. de Bassano—Reflections respecting new men.

For upwards of a twelvemonth it had been remarked that a certain Russian officer was seen to return from France to Russia, and regularly back again to Paris, as soon as he had brought a reply to St. Petersburg. It was jocosely said that, in all probability, no one else was found acquainted with the road: others, however, remarked, with better reason, that the circumstance of the journey being always performed by the same officer, was not without a particular motive. In fact, from the month of March, 1808, until February, 1812, a period of four years, he travelled ten or twelve times from Russia to Paris, a distance equivalent to a voyage round the

world, which it takes a ship three years to perform. Towards the end of 1810, I stumbled, by pure accident, upon a proof that the precipitate return of this officer had a much more important object in view than the compliments and assurances of friendly sentiments which might be conveyed by the letters intrusted to his care. His intervals of leisure, between the time of his arrival and departure, were engaged in studies which were calculated to impose upon all who might have pretended to assign a different motive to his missions; when seeking, however, for a teacher of mathematics, he found in the object of his choice one of those men who are known at the police by the name of *observers*. The latter accepted his offer, feeling delighted at an opportunity which promised so rich a harvest.

After the lapse of a short time, the Russian officer tried to discover the means of information possessed by his tutor, and asked him if he was acquainted with any of the clerks in the offices of the war-department.

The teacher of mathematics replied in the affirmative, which was really the case; but before committing himself any farther, the Russian officer promised that when proof should be afforded of his telling the truth, he would put him in the way of making money.

The teacher made me acquainted with this proposal, which I desired him to accept, and to do every thing that might be asked of him, after giving me due intimation of what was going forward.

He went in consequence to visit the acquaintances he had in the war-offices, and obtained some private documents, or printed papers, which sufficiently proved that he possessed some means of access to the ministry. He brought me those documents, in which I altered a few figures, and returned them to him for the inspection of the Russian officer. This information inspired the latter with confidence; and he gave his mathematician a note containing a series of questions in

his own hand-writing, all having for their object to search in the offices of the war-department for every thing connected with the *personnel* and *materiel* of the French armies.

This note was immediately brought to me, and left no longer any doubt as to the grounds of the confidence reposed in the Russian officer by his government, and the part he was expected to act in Paris.

I reported the circumstance to the Emperor, who at first refused to credit it; but who became convinced when he saw the series of questions in the hand-writing of the Russian officer. He enjoined me not to say a word on the subject; but sent him off the next day, or the day following, with a letter for the Emperor of Russia.

The Emperor was far from imagining that an aide-de-camp of the Emperor Alexander, who was admitted and welcomed every where in that character, should have been placed near his person, for the purpose also of observing what was going forward.

He had, therefore, the more readily afforded him every means of carrying his ostensible mission into effect; and that officer was received every where in consequence of the Emperor's having personally recommended to every circle of society that great attention should be shown to him: so that all were eager to pay deference to a hint which afforded the means of pleasing the sovereign, by complying with his wishes.

I recollect that, on that officer's departure, the Emperor recommended a letter to be written to his own ambassador, in order that obstacles might be thrown in the way of his return. The sequel of the story will show that his desire cannot have been attended to.

It was during the autumnal residence of the court at Fontainebleau that the Emperor intimated to the Emperor of Russia's aide-de-camp, that he was going to send him back to St. Petersburg; and he gave him a long audience, in which he very properly told the Emperor, that the best com-

mission he could take back to his master was, the assurance that no conscription was intended to be called out in the present year. The Emperor himself repeated these words to me.

He was right; but what was the Emperor's reward for relying upon the assurances of peace, which were constantly made to him, when the cannon of Wagram was still roaring in our ears? Similar assurances had also preceded that battle; and yet what support had been afforded us? The uncourteous reception given to the proposal for a family alliance, which would have had the effect of drawing closer the ties between both countries, was not calculated to keep up the harmony again re-established between them: it had, on the contrary, something insulting in it, which even amongst private individuals would have wounded the honourable feelings of the party who might have experienced the refusal. In other respects, the greater part of the army which had performed the campaign of 1809 had been removed to Spain or to Holland: there only remained the four divisions which were quartered in the provinces of Hanover, Fulda, Erfurt, &c. under Marshal Davout's orders.

The cavalry was in a still less hostile attitude: since, with the exception of the regiments of cuirassiers, all the other corps had been reduced to half their numbers, for the purpose of completing the skeletons of the cavalry regiments doing duty in Spain. The result of all this was, that if the Emperor had been again attacked, he would have been found in a situation similar to that of 1809. This is, no doubt, what his enemies desired; but he would have been inexcusable, had he allowed himself to be again taken by surprise, owing to an excess of confidence: the more so, when he had to carry on a war in the south of Europe, which might, from one moment to another, call for a supply of thirty thousand fresh troops. He had, besides, no motive for placing himself at the mercy of his enemies.

The armaments going forward in France were not to be ascribed to any other cause: its resources in respect to population were not equal to those of Russia, who could not, with any show of reason, take umbrage at the raising of such forces as she pretended to have a fear of. This calling out of fresh soldiers actually took place; they were almost all intended for Spain. Nevertheless, they were sent to Germany: farther troops were, moreover, drawn from Spain, and sent in that direction. The sequel of these Memoirs will afford the solution of the unhappy event above adverted to.

The aide-de-camp of the Emperor of Russia had scarcely reached St. Petersburg when he was sent back to Paris, as if he had merely gone to Russia for the purpose of changing horses. Every one was astonished at such obstinacy: it was accordingly deemed prudent to watch the movements of that officer, and to throw obstacles in his way. Common sense clearly pointed out that he must have had several parts to perform; but his good fortune would have it, that instead of meeting with any obstruction, he derived assistance from the very persons whose duty it was to keep an eye upon him.

He returned to Paris at a moment when he was supposed to have scarcely arrived in Russia; and he was the bearer of a letter from Alexander to the Emperor, containing fresh protestations of sincerity, &c.; phrases which had been lavished upon us for nearly the last two years, and which on the present occasion, in particular, were brought and repeated by a messenger, who had in his pocket an instruction for carrying on the most ill-managed system of spying that could have been devised. The French administration would have covered itself with ridicule, if it had failed to unravel it. It was already six years in existence, and had been kept up during M. Fouché's administration. Which were the sentiments most entitled to credit? Were they those expressed in the letter of which the aide-de-camp was the bearer, or

those which had suggested the instruction delivered to him, and so faithfully carried into effect?

There are people who think it natural that the governing powers should make their official intercourse available to the purpose of gleaning information in high quarters; as for that which is obtained by means of diplomatic envoys, no objection can be raised against it. These are official personages to whom every liberty is permitted, because they always possess the means of disguising their real character when circumstances require it. But the aide-de-camp of a sovereign, sent direct by him to another sovereign as the bearer of an autograph letter from his master, is not provided for by the rules of etiquette; and ought the less to adopt a conduct liable to suspicion, as every attention was shown to him in private society, in consequence of the esteem in which he was understood to be held.

A different conduct towards an individual, who is rather a personal envoy than a public chargé d'affaires, would be a want of attention to his master. It is highly unfair, therefore, to abuse the courtesy shown to the outward character assumed, which is disparaged by the concealed part in reality performed.

Sovereigns are at liberty to propose similar missions to whomsoever they please; but they have never made the acceptance of those missions obligatory; and a special vocation alone can give the courage to accept them.

The Emperor did not express any displeasure at the aide-de-camp's return: he gave him a kind reception, and even spoke to him of the series of questions he had put to the teacher of mathematics; saying, that such a part had something dishonourable in it, which it ill became him to act, and urged him to give it up, otherwise he could no longer receive him.

The aide-de-camp, pretending to be greatly affected at so

much kindness, promised every thing, and pleaded for excuse the natural feeling of curiosity to which he had given way in his first journeys. The Emperor believed, and continued to admit him to his private society as he had formerly done.

The aide-de-camp, who had benefited by his former experience, availed himself with great skill of his free access into society, to complain of the colouring which it was pretended to give to his frequent missions to Paris. He alleged that none but evil-minded men could thus entertain the design of injuring him; and added some reflections which were calculated to raise him in public estimation. This method fully answered his purpose; and he succeeded so effectually, as to obtain the strong commendations and praises of the very minister who should always have kept him at arm's-length; and who, instead of having a watchful eye upon his conduct, afforded him the shelter of his protection, so far indeed as to exceed all bounds of discretion.

It accidentally happened that on the very day of this young officer's arrival in Paris, there appeared in the papers an article of a rather inflammatory nature, which bore directly upon him, in respect to the missions intrusted to his charge.

That article had not been inserted until previously submitted to the diplomatic censure: nevertheless, a complaint was made to the Emperor of the unbecoming nature of the publication, and the ill effect it had produced. "How is this," he said, addressing me, "you tolerate, or rather encourage such publications? you, who when living amongst the Russians have frequently addressed complaints to me respecting certain writings which were much less tinged with bitterness than the one you have been instrumental in circulating. You know how ready they are to take offence: you must therefore be sparing of their feelings; you, especially, who are urging me all the day long to make peace; unless, perhaps, your opinions are changed, and you wish to involve me in a war. You know I cannot wish it, being absolutely unprepared for

such an event. Lend me therefore your assistance to enable me to avoid it: you cannot be of service to me by adopting any other conduct." I plainly saw in what quarter I was to look for the cause of this burst of anger, and did not disguise my sentiments from the Emperor. My remark only drew upon me a still harsher reprimand: it seemed dictated by a personal animosity, which he assuredly did not feel for me. I gave way; but first thought it my duty to bring M. Czernitchef's conduct to the Emperor's recollection. He had however been assured, beforehand, that this officer was a man of the utmost prudence and circumspection; that he felt embarrassed in the world by the public-report of the character which had been falsely ascribed to him, and therefore seldom made his appearance in society. I received orders to let him go and come, and allow him to see and listen to whatever he pleased: nothing more was wanting than that I should myself procure information for him. The hint was sufficient for me; but I took care only to close one eye, being aware that my suspicions were well-founded, and that every effort was made to deceive the Emperor, who would soon find out his mistake, as it actually came to pass a few months afterwards.

I had been sharply reprimanded. M. de Champagny was still more roughly handled, and lost his portfolio, which was transferred to M. de Bassano. The latter was unquestionably a man of great personal merit, very obliging, and diligent in his duties; but he was less calculated for the new functions bestowed upon him than a man just fallen from the clouds.

The Emperor had promoted soldiers from the ranks to the highest military honours; nothing was more natural: when an army performed such extraordinary feats, it might well be supposed that real merit was to be found scattered in all its gradations of rank; and no surprise would be felt at the circumstance of marshals of France being taken from a company of grenadiers.

This was not the case in civil appointments: the merits of the individuals in whom they were vested would be canvassed by a greater number of enlightened men, whether their former colleagues or present rivals. I was not so much the subject of general scrutiny when raised to the ministry of the police, because I was taken from the army, and was less known. So much harm had already been spoken of me, that if the tenth part of it were true, I could not fail to verify it in a short time; and public opinion waited for that moment to pass judgment upon me. The only reason of my being sparingly dealt with was, that I was justly supposed to be as unchangeable in my duties as in my affections, and that I belonged to no revolutionary party. M. de Bassano was better known: he entered upon a theatre to which a series of events had given extraordinary dimensions; and in the career of fortune this was his first starting point. All recollection was forgotten of the distance performed by military men, who had risen to fame in the midst of the perils which encompassed them; but a strict account was kept of every step taken by those who attempted to get the start of their colleagues in the performance of administrative duties.

M. de Bassano's progressive advance in the civil career was, therefore, strictly canvassed; and although he had always rendered faithful services, and displayed a remarkable zeal in the performance of them, this was no protection to him against criticism.

From that moment I marked the rise of ungenerous observations, which I would gladly have discountenanced: they were unquestionably calumnious imputations proceeding from evil-designing men; but they had the desired effect.

No blame ought assuredly to attach to new families, if, instead of inheriting the glory of their ancestors, they had themselves laid the ground-work for illustrating their posterity. Time alone establishes the distinction between both. In a thousand years hence, history will confound them together,

if even it should not place those of a more recent date in the first rank: certain, however, it is, that, at the time I speak of, the ancient nobility, with reference to those of recent creation, were compared to old medals which are esteemed of greater value than the current coin.

These obstacles, which were in reality mere trifles, worked with a powerful effect, as soon as that position in society had been reached, when every species of illusion must be set at work for the purpose of harmonising with a class of people, whose power over public opinion is derived from the antiquity of their renown; and there never was a case in which the proverb, that none are prophets in their own country, could be more properly applied.

The Duke of Bassano had distinguished himself as secretary of state by his assiduity to business: he had accustomed the Emperor to overload him with work; and he never allowed any thing to fall into arrear. He had a regular classification of what was of the most pressing nature, what demanded early attention, and what admitted of delay: every thing was done with order and unfailing regularity.

His zeal in the performance of his duties had naturally secured to him the highest consideration, and, consequently, a powerful influence; but this did not extend beyond the limits of office, and afforded him no means of exercising that out-of-door influence, which can only be obtained gradually, and by long intercourse with the world. This branch of the ministry, therefore, rather became an office from whence emanated orders to lesser powers, than a means of conciliating the greater ones.

The crisis of events was approaching: our foreign affairs required more than ever to be managed by a man already accustomed to direct, instead of one who had to acquire a knowledge of them.

The practice had long prevailed, in the department for foreign affairs, and even under M. de Talleyrand, of submit-

ing to the Emperor the original correspondence of the agents of that ministry. He did almost all the work himself, even the notes which French agents were to remit to the courts where they acted in an accredited character. As this circumstance was well known, those notes were considered by the envoys as the equivalent of positive orders to them: they accordingly received and transmitted the notes, and were thus relieved from the responsibility they would otherwise have incurred had they only received ministerial instructions, the development and success of which would have been left to their own discretion in their diplomatic capacity.

This mode of transacting business was attended with another serious inconvenience: the service of the ministry was thereby confined to the duty of keeping the register of correspondence in order, and became no longer of any real assistance to the Emperor: it had become an official practice to affix the name of the sovereign to every thing, even to matters of which he could not possess the slightest knowledge: accordingly the envoys of inferior foreign courts soon grew tired of a mode of intercourse which shut out all discussion. It was alleged that the Duke of Cadore was too inaccessible to them: but much worse was now happening; they hardly ventured any longer to discuss any public business.

His loss was felt by all: but M. de Talleyrand was more particularly regretted; for he had the laudable practice of replying to whatever was written to him; and he never held any intercourse with the Emperor upon public business, except in an official manner, never mixing up his name with the arguments which he introduced in his letters.

CHAPTER XI.

The Hans Towns annexed to the empire—Protest of Russia—Prohibitory measures of that power—M. de Czernitchef—Opinions which he conveys to his sovereign—Influence of that event—Pregnancy of the Empress—Hopes of the nation—Birth of the King of Rome—General intoxication of joy.

Soon after the entrance of M. de Bassano into the department of foreign affairs, the Hans Towns and the small district of Oldenburg were united to the empire. A general clamour was raised against this measure. The fact of its being called for by the force of events was wholly disregarded, or lost sight of; as well as that the continental system, for which so many sacrifices had been made, became an idle measure, if English commerce could pour its produce into those countries, and inundate Germany with cotton goods, and with articles, the growth of the colonies, to which our prohibitory measures refused admittance. It was found more convenient to set up a hue and cry against pretended projects of ambition, a rage for extending and aggrandising an empire, the dimensions of which were already too great; as if such annexations could ever be considered as definitive in their character; as if it were not obvious to the plainest understanding that they could only be transient measures, destined to throw obstacles in the way of foreign industry, and to prove to the enemy what he had to expect, unless he renounced the unjust pretensions which he held forth; as if, in short, they could be viewed otherwise than in the light of additional countries at the disposal of France, to be brought forward as a set-off in negotiations for a peace. With respect to the district of Oldenburg, Russia, which openly favoured English commerce, had just prohibited our own produce. That country had again yielded to the influence of the cabinet of St. James's: her views were now openly declared. There was

assuredly no ground for giving a tacit acquiescence to the infractions of the treaty. The Emperor was following up the development of his new projects. He was quite as well informed of the augmentation which Russia had given to her armies, as she pretended to be of our increasing our own forces.

"How plainly we perceive," he said on the occasion, "what the Emperor Alexander might have done to prevent the war of 1809: now that he fancies he has grounds for personal apprehension, he is not at a loss for means." Under pretence, in fact, of the demand occasioned by the war in which he was engaged against Turkey, and which he was anxious to bring to a close, he had gradually doubled the strength of his armies. All Germany was equally aware of it, and watched the movements of the two cabinets, as it was clearly seen that the armaments of Russia exceeded the demand called for by the Turkish war. A restless disposition was beginning to manifest itself on both sides.* The Emperor did not believe that the Russians would venture to attack him single-handed; but he was apprehensive of such another alliance as that of 1805, which might be attended with more dangerous consequences, as he had less means in readiness to resist it, and would have had to contend against a greater number of enemies scattered over a more extensive space of country. He was cautious, therefore, not to accelerate events, but adopted measures of precaution with the greater activity, as he felt it necessary to keep up the confidence which his allies reposed in him. To this clouded

* This restless spirit appeared to me to date from the period of the marriage: it had in fact been said to my certain [knowledge, amongst other absurd reports, that if the Emperor had married a Russian instead of an Austrian princess, the Austrian empire would eventually have been dismembered; but that since he had married a princess of the house of Austria, Russia would probably suffer. Some persons have been found credulous enough to believe such stories; and a spirit of malevolence has endeavoured to convince those of their reality who were most interested in ascertaining the exact truth.

aspect of the political horizon is to be ascribed his sending to Spain the troops of the confederated princes of Germany, and withdrawing in their stead an equal number of French and Polish troops, in which he placed the most unbounded reliance.

The annexation of the Hans Towns and of the country of Oldenburg to the French empire, trenched too much upon the interests of European powers to admit of their viewing it with indifference. The annexation of Holland was scarcely forgotten when that of Hamburgh, Lubeck, and Bremen, was announced. We were instantly assailed by a general clamour: apathy was only shown on those occasions when the English inflicted any injury upon us.

This uniformity of sentiments against France could not long remain a secret in the latter country, nor fail to create intense uneasiness. All this augured an approaching war, which was looked forward to with the utmost horror.

Whilst in this state of agitation, intelligence was received of a protest, in which the Russians declared that they had taken no part in the late territorial aggrandizements of France, and especially in the annexations of the Hans Towns and the duchy of Oldenburg, which they formally denounced; declaring, at the same time, that the Emperor of Russia could never view that act with feelings of indifference.

The meaning of this, in words as clear as language could convey, was, that we must prepare for war; which was as sure to follow the protest, as the prick of a pin, inflicted in good earnest, is a certain prelude to the firing of cannon; and when animosity comes in for a share of the contest, the distance between both extremes is quickly measured.

A commercial ukase had already been issued, as I have above related, which forbade the introduction of any of our produce into Russia, such as Champaign, Burgundy and Bordeaux wines, silks, and other articles; whilst those of English

produce, which Alexander had pledged himself to shut out, were thenceforward freely admitted into her harbours.

As Russia, in virtue of her alliance with us, was bound to pursue this prohibitory system towards English commerce, the result would necessarily have been that, by now shutting us out, she was depriving herself of all trade: a truly absurd supposition. The power of an Emperor of Russia can never be carried to such an extent as to impose on his country so serious a privation: to believe this, would be to form an incorrect estimate of that power. Accordingly, a second ukase, issued in favour of English commerce, soon made its appearance. The Emperor Alexander was fully sensible of its necessity; and he was placed in such circumstances, as to be compelled either to overlook the infringement of the article of his treaty of alliance with us, by which he had consented to close his ports against the English, to whom he thenceforward allowed free ingress into, and egress from, his dominions; or to prepare himself for the most serious personal misfortunes, by a resistance to the general will of his subjects.

The ukase therefore against French commerce was nothing less than a signal of an accommodation between Russia and England, and consequently a signal for the annulling of our mutual alliance. England had justly considered that her union with Russia would be a natural consequence of the alliance between France and Austria.

We were now at the end of February, 1811. Every one perceived the storm which was gathering in the distance; and it became a source of general alarm. Commercial transactions, which had fallen to the lowest ebb, now ceased altogether.

The Russian legation exercised the utmost vigilance in every direction: it assumed a pacific tone, and was soon beset by some who were attracted by curiosity to know the exact state of affairs, and by others who relied upon reverses of fortune, without which any change in their condition was

hopeless. The aide-de-camp of the Emperor Alexander, who was in Paris, used every exertion to procure statements of our recruiting and of our armaments. These were the political thermometers which would determine the period of a commencement of operations. With the view of making a parade of his zeal, and of the proper use he had made of his time, he ascribed to the Emperor Napoleon the intention of sending to Poland all the troops intended for Spain. This was the colouring of his correspondence with his master. He had suffered himself to be imposed upon by those who spread the reports of a contemplated partition of the Russian empire. He became an instrument, which evil designing men laid hold of in Paris, and to whom they communicated the most extravagant information, which he nevertheless reported to Russia as positive facts. It followed, as a natural consequence, that the Russians would raise armaments proportioned to those which, according to the information given to the Emperor of Russia, were actually preparing in France. The counter-effect of this was soon felt in Paris, where the increase in the armaments of the Russians was communicated by the French ambassador at St. Petersburg. This would also give rise to fresh armaments. Thus it was that the presumptuous vanity of one or two young Russians, wholly incompetent to perform the parts which they had assumed, gradually drew two colossal powers into open conflict. Had the result been fatal to their country, they would have been loaded with the animadversion of their fellow-countrymen. The contest having terminated against us, they have claims upon their gratitude in exact proportion to the dangers to which they exposed themselves.

I shall have to return to this subject, after relating various circumstances which occurred at the same period.

We had reached the month of March, 1811: the Empress was near her confinement. The public mind was exclusively engaged in calculating the consequences which might attend

the birth of a princess or of a prince: the latter was wished for with an anxiety which almost checked the hope of such an event. We hope what we wish for, but we almost despair of obtaining it.

The birth of a prince was calculated to give a stability to all things which appeared of an uncertain nature: it held out a hope of a termination of the war, which would then be without an object. No revolutionary convulsions would any longer be apprehended, because the interests of all would be linked to the same destiny, which would thenceforward be firmly secured. Every species of conjecture was formed, when, in the evening of the 19th of March, the Empress felt the first pains of labour. The report soon spread all over Paris; because, whilst the arch-chancellor and M. Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely were sent for, their presence being required for the purpose of drawing up the act of the child's birth, the professional men, such as Doctor Corvisart and M. Dubois, the surgeon, were summoned to the palace; so that, in less than an hour, the apartments on the ground-floor of the Tuileries were filled with upwards of two hundred persons of both sexes.

The only individuals in the bed-room of the Empress were the Emperor, the arch-chancellor, the medical men, the lady of honour, and other ladies in attendance. The whole night was passed in a state of anxious expectation. The Duchess of Montebello and Madame de Montesquiou withdrew from time to time in order to communicate intelligence of the state of the Empress, who suffered to such a degree as to excite the alarm of the accoucheur who attended her. He arrived before his colleagues; and judging, almost immediately, that the pains of labour would be extremely severe, he had gone up to the Emperor's apartment to communicate the circumstance to him, and to request he would come down and send in all haste for Doctor Corvisart. The Emperor, who was never alarmed at any thing, replied to M. Dubois in these

words—"Why would you have me go down? Is there any danger?" M. Dubois replied in the negative, but still wished him to be present. The Emperor could clearly perceive that M. Dubois had lost his usual presence of mind: he therefore came down to the apartment, in order to restore him to that firmness which was so much needed on the occasion: but he first asked if the accident he apprehended was a case hitherto unheard-of; to which M. Dubois having replied that he had known a thousand such, "Well, then," said the Emperor, "how did you treat them? Surely I was not present. Then act in this case as you did in others. Muster up all your courage; fancy that you are not attending the Empress, but the wife of a citizen of the Rue Saint Denis."—"Very well," rejoined M. Dubois, looking steadfastly at the Emperor for a moment, "since your Majesty allows me, I will do so." He preceded the Emperor down stairs, and taking off his coat, set about his work with that firmness which cannot be dispensed with even where the greatest skill is exerted. It is no doubt owing to M. Dubois' dexterity that the Emperor's son is indebted for the preservation of his life. The Empress was in a state bordering upon absolute exhaustion, and was only confined at eight o'clock in the morning, after twelve hours of unheard-of labour.

The birth of the King of Rome was immediately announced in the saloon; and in an instant the two hundred persons who were in waiting hastened to spread the news in every direction. It had been publicly made known several days before, that the birth of a princess would be announced by a discharge of twenty-one pieces of cannon, and that of a prince by one hundred. Ever since the previous night the cannon of the Invalids were loaded, and the gunners at their posts. When the order was sent to them to fire, they fired the twenty-one discharges leisurely; then allowing a short interval to elapse, in order to keep the people in suspense, they continued a fire of eighty pieces of cannon, which the public impatience

greeted by rending the air with cries of *Long live the Emperor!* Paris, in the height of her rejoicings, never presented so uniform a picture of joy. Although the event happened on a working-day, the scene was one of general festivity. A balloon suddenly rose up, carrying into the clouds a car containing the celebrated aerial traveller, Madame Blanchard, with thousands of printed notices of the auspicious news; which, by following the direction of the winds, she scattered all over the neighbourhood of Paris. It was also announced by the telegraph; and couriers were sent in those directions where no telegraphic communications were established.

Fortune, which had so constantly adhered to us, appeared to crown all her favours on the 20th of March, 1811, by presenting us with an heir to a power which such gigantic efforts had created; and which, in the absence of this child, presented nothing but precipices to our view. The most sanguine hopes of securing a profound peace were now indulged in. The idea of a war, or of any warlike occupation, was dismissed from the mind of every one as being wholly out of the question.

The months of April and May were passed in congratulations and court receptions. No infant ever came into the world under auspices more favourable, or promising so great a concurrence of the will of every one, for the object of preserving inviolate an inheritance which the non-existence of such a child could alone have broken asunder.

Those who have since insulted his youth were then the most eager in the expression of their wishes for the success of his father, and were loud in their protestations of fidelity to him, not one of which could stand the test of his misfortunes.

CHAPTER XII.

Papal affairs—The Emperor convokes the bishops—Painful situation of the prelacy —Malevolence turns against the Emperor a measure which was intended to remedy the evils of the church—The party-leaders are denounced by their brethren—Means by which their friendly disposition is secured—Four of their number are sent to Vincennes—Transgressions of the Bishop of Tournay—Dissolution of the council—The bishops individually recognise what they had refused to sanction as a body.

It was in the summer of 1811 that the Emperor determined to strike a blow at the Pope, since the second message brought to him by the bishops had not proved more successful than the first. The obstinacy of this head of the church was so extraordinary, that the Emperor determined to enter into no farther negotiation with him; and he attempted to effect by means of the assembled bishops what he had failed to obtain from their chief. He ordered all the most celebrated theologians to hold a consultation; and conversed with the bishops who stood highest in public opinion, respecting the danger to which a question, exclusively temporal in its nature, would expose the spiritual affairs of the church: he inquired of each what means could be resorted to for the purpose of averting a schism, of which some indication was already appearing. The clergy of France was generally possessed of very great merit; the same may be said of the clergy of Italy: the latter, however, always displayed some degree of animosity against the court of Rome. The ecclesiastical commission, to whom the Emperor had submitted the question, advised him to assemble a national council, composed of bishops of both countries; to which, after making it acquainted with the existing state of things, and with the events immediately preceding it, he should communicate the repeated refusals of the holy father to give up points of mere ecclesiastical dis-

cipline, and lay before it the consequences which had already resulted from a refusal applying to matters quite foreign to the temporal discussions which had arisen between him and the Emperor. The commission, in short, advised his making known to the council, that it had only been assembled for the purpose of applying remedies to the fatal consequences which were likely to flow from the Pope's obstinacy in attempting to confound what was personal to himself as the sovereign of Rome, with what was properly to be expected from the spiritual head of the church: it being to be remarked that this church was still in existence, and could never be wanting; and that since the head of it persisted in not providing for its exigencies, it was highly important to pass him by, and to let him know the motives which had led to the determination of doing without him.

Independently of the circumstance that this proposal, which was in harmony with the opinion of every enlightened French bishop, was founded in reason; it was also the only remedy calculated for an evil which could not be checked in any other manner. This situation, moreover, was not wholly unexampled in history, where we find a proof that a similar course had already been resorted to. The Emperor accordingly determined to assemble a council in Paris. He dispatched through the respective ministries of France and Italy, orders of convocation to all the bishops of both countries, pointing out the day on which their presence was expected in Paris. They all attended the summons; some, however, with very uncompromising dispositions. This convocation afforded us an opportunity of ascertaining how many episcopal sees were filled by men of limited understanding, who were neither possessed of knowledge nor education. With the exception of a few remaining prelates of the ancient French clergy, which was so celebrated for its mental acquirements, the rest was composed of wretched friars, who had attained the prelacy through means of a patronage which had succeeded in ob-

taining the sanction of government to its recommendations, at the time of the restoration of public worship, when nothing was more remote than the idea that those prelates might one day be called upon to act so important a part.

Each favourite of power obtained a bishopric for his relative with more facility than he might formerly have obtained a mere curacy: nothing more was required than priests of a peaceful disposition. Provided they were of exemplary morals, it mattered little whether they were regular theologians, or whether they could only read their breviary.

This oversight had the effect of encouraging the spread of ignorance: because a bishop, who was himself uninformed, would not suffer in his diocese a priest who might be a contrast with the confined understanding of his superior. Accordingly, when the moment arrived for gathering the fruit of the improvements introduced in France, notwithstanding the influence of a considerable part of the nation, nothing more was reaped than what had actually been sown.

This council, which had been convoked in order to attend to the spiritual question which the Pope refused to detach from the temporal one, ran into a course directly opposed to what it had been attempted to give it. The Italian bishops were alone found to have formed a correct notion of the proposal, and to evince an independence of the papal despotism. But the French bishops, amongst whom were several men of sterling merit, were so carelessly managed, that no good resulted from their favourable intentions, instead of making them divide the burden with the prelates of narrow and confined ideas, for the purpose of enlightening and preserving them from the error into which they fell for want of proper guidance. The consequence was, that malevolence, which is ever on the watch, soon found out what had been left undone, sounded the feelings of each, and led into the road of opposition those bishops who had only come to Paris with the intention of assisting the Emperor, and relieving themselves from

a situation of the consequences of which they were fully sensible. They had for nearly two years been unceasing in their complaints to the administration respecting the state into which the church had fallen : they had been called upon to afford it relief, and by a strange act of contradiction they completed its ruin.

The devotees of both sexes took upon themselves to manage the prelates. They were careful not to apply to those who followed no other guide than their understanding; but secured all the others, whose education had been neglected. With the exception of the hours when the council was sitting, those prelates were sure to be found at the houses of the devotees, where they were visited by the messengers of malevolence, who presented themselves in the character of angels sent from heaven, in order to show them the precipice into which they were about to plunge, and to remind them that the vicar of Jesus Christ was detained in captivity, and called for all their exertions to restore to the mourning church its beloved chief. If the precaution had been taken to publish the previous proceedings of the negotiation with the Pope at Savona, such a course would have been of powerful assistance. The consequence of neglecting that precaution was, that these idle assertions, uttered to men incapable of discovering their unsoundness, assumed a consistency which no argument was afterwards found adequate to destroy, and completely deceived public opinion as to the real object intended in the convocation of the council. That assembly needed to be presided by a man who might have exercised over it the ascendency of distinguished merit. It was suffered to become a field for the intrigues of all those who felt an anxiety to defeat its real object.

Instead of seeking the means of severing the person of the Pope from the affairs of the church, which were exclusively to engross its attention, it was, on the contrary, engaged in the task of raising up those two questions which were perfectly

distinct. Not a single rational discussion took place at that meeting, which reckoned, however, many men of learning and distinguished talent; but the spirit of mediocrity far outnumbered them, and they were forced to remain silent.

The Italian prelates were also prevented from speaking, owing to the difference of language. The result of this state of things was, that so far from the Emperor having gained any strength to contend with the Pope's obstinacy, the Pope acquired new strength from the attempted contest. These vexations, which were fomented by the spirit of superstition generally complained of throughout France, were thus on the point of again exercising their baneful influence; and the seeds of discord were about to spring up anew in every class of society.

There would have been imminent danger for the Emperor in overlooking this state of things. He then ordered me, for the first time, to direct my attention to the proceedings of the council, with which he had at first enjoined me not to interfere.

I had not discovered until now that taking the bishops individually, they manifested the best possible intentions for the public welfare; and even that indifference for the Pope which they were not called upon to evince. I was at a loss to understand how so great a conformity of sentiments should have failed to produce any reasonable determination in the council, taken as a body. On seeking for the motives of this unaccountable discrepancy, I soon discovered it in the fatal influence exercised over all their colleagues by three or four bishops, who had either shown themselves agitators of discord, or too weak-minded to resist participating in that disposition.

Certain it is, that they were all pointed out, by the unanimous voice of their colleagues, as the leaders of the opposition. This occurrence is of too recent a date to admit of my entering farther into details, without incurring the risk of

entailing trouble upon those who have had the courage to bring their underhand intrigues to light.

The motives, however, which led to the punishment of four out of the twelve members of that assembly, who were loudly denounced to me, will serve to point out, in a general manner, what were the opinions of the majority composing it.

Suffice it to say, that every letter they had written to their grand vicars, from the moment of their departure from their respective dioceses until they were removed from Paris, had been read, though many of the letters had, by way of precaution, false addresses affixed to them. Some appeared to have adopted a language agreed upon beforehand. The stir which was made in the dioceses, after the receipt of their instructions, afforded a clear insight into the sentiments they were endeavouring to inculcate. As, therefore, the dioceses of Ghent, Tournay, Troyes, and Toulouse, were those from whence the most unfavourable reports were received, the punishment fell upon the titular bishops of those sees. The Emperor was the more displeased at the result of the disclosure, as three of them were almoners of his private chapel, and received an annual allowance of twelve thousand francs out of his civil list, independently of their episcopal revenues; and that the Bishop of Ghent, who had been an emigrant, and once Bishop of Posen in Poland, had formerly used every exertion to obtain leave to return to France; and had, moreover, been one of the first to solicit the honour of personally serving the Emperor, who refused him none of the favours which he applied for on behalf of his near or remote connexions. The kindness he evinced towards him was owing to his respect for the memory of his father, old Marshal de Broglie, who died during the emigration.

The Emperor was well aware that religion forbade a priest to compound with his conscience; but he also knew that it never enjoined ingratitude as a precept, in return for benefits conferred. Those gentlemen might well be satisfied not to

go beyond the opinions they had uttered in the council; but, in availing themselves of their ministry to propagate errors, they were acting the part of disturbers of the public peace.

I received orders to confine them in the castle of Vincennes, which was immediately done. Papers were found upon some, the examination of which afforded no great information in respect to political matters, except that they had received, read, and circulated the papal bull and instruction, which had occasioned the arrest of M. d'Astros, and of the cardinals; and yet these gentlemen, like all other French bishops, had, at the time of their being installed, taken the usual oath upon the gospel, at the mass said on the Sunday on which they had been presented to the Emperor.

This oath was pronounced on bended knees, in the imperial chapel and in the Emperor's tribune, as well as in the presence of all those who attended the mass, at the moment of the gospel being read. The bishop was dressed in his pontificals: he approached the Emperor, knelt, and with his hand extended over the gospel, he pronounced the following words in a loud and distinct voice:—"I swear and promise, on the holy gospel, obedience to the constitutions of the empire, and fidelity to the Emperor. I farther swear, never to allow in my diocese any doctrine to be taught which shall be contrary to the policy of the state; to keep up no correspondence, whether of a direct or indirect nature, with internal or external enemies; and if any thing should come to my knowledge relating to the public tranquillity, I promise to divulge it to the government."

Such was, as nearly as I can recollect, the oaths taken by all the bishops. Notwithstanding so positive an engagement, not one of them transmitted the slightest communication on the affairs; the particulars of which were hawked by M. d'Astros, about the diocese of Paris, probably not the only one in which the Pope attempted to establish his exclusive authority.

Not only did they abstain from making any such communications, and left to the police the task of discovering the mischief, but they moreover endeavoured to propagate it, thinking, no doubt, that they were bound to more than a mere character of neutrality.

It is painful to have to comment upon the total absence of generous feelings in men who were bound to set an example of tried fidelity for the sake of their diocesans. Such was the conduct of individuals who a few years before were hunted down and banished, and afraid of wearing their clerical dress! such was their gratitude for the protection extended to them by a sovereign, who had been under the necessity of exerting his power and personal influence in order to reconcile them to the nation! He had thrown their country open to them, restored the ceremonies of public worship, and recommended them to the consideration of the people. In fine, after reinstating them in their spiritual authority, he had, with the view to meet their temporal expenses, augmented the burdens of the nation, which had loudly expressed its discontent at that act of benevolence. But the clergy is not slow in forgetting: none of the bishops retained any recollection of the benefactor to whom they were indebted for the authority of which they made such an improper use, thereby verifying the predictions of the people. "The Emperor," they said, when he was loading them with favours, "will see what kind of people he has to deal with: he judges them by the standard of his elevated mind: he will be deceived in them."

He demanded of the four bishops the abdication of their sees; and appointed to their dioceses other priests of more correct feelings, who experienced numberless difficulties on taking possession, owing to the instructions which were left behind by their predecessors. If the loss of these bishops was attended with political inconveniences, I must however acknowledge, that the see of Tournay could not have been filled by any one less calculated for the dignity of the pre-

lacy. I cannot even at this moment account for the omission of this corrupt priest to destroy such papers as were found in his residence. He owed this precaution to the persons whom they designated, and with whom he kept up a correspondence. It is only out of consideration for their families and myself that I abstain from naming them; for an intercourse such as the one regularly maintained by this bishop was not of a character to entitle him to any consideration. He was nothing more than an agent of debauchery and corruption; and the visits which he performed throughout his diocese were a series of saturnalian orgies.

If he has represented himself after the Emperor's downfall as a victim of his tyranny, I feel happy at having it in my power to inform him that his dismissal originated in the proofs of his corrupt morals, which were found in his desk, in the very drawers where he kept his bulls; containing, amongst other papers, some chapters of the divine office, translated into French verse for the use of the grenadiers and dragoons. Some of Piron's works are not looser in their descriptions.

Any one who might have beheld this man's attitude in society would have readily intrusted an only daughter to his care; and yet there never was a monster more deserving of divine punishment.

When the Emperor found, after the arrest of those four bishops, that the assembled council was preparing to start fresh difficulties, instead of removing those already in existence, he determined to dissolve it, and to send the bishops back to their respective dioceses, however much he lamented, at the same time, that an assembly composed of all the dignitaries of the church should have failed to comprehend that he only convoked it to promote its own interests. Some of them, previously to their departure, lodged in the hands of the minister of public worship a declaration, by which they acknowledged that the propositions which had been laid before

them did not contain any thing contrary to the canons, and that they acquiesced in them as far as they were individually concerned. They all successively signed a similar declaration; and it must still be deposited in the archives of the ministry of public worship. This declaration of each of the members of the council, separately taken, forms a much stronger act than any determination they might have adopted in a general assembly, inasmuch as no doubt can be entertained that each of them had maturely reflected previously to committing to paper and putting his signature to his opinion.

Nevertheless the Pope remained inflexible. He refused to grant any bulls to the newly elected bishops, and continued to keep the public mind in a state of agitation, as far as it was in his power to do so. He was, however, left at Savona, and kept isolated by the adoption of measures commensurate with the dangers with which the country had been threatened by the first burst of discontent, excited, not so much by his own acts, as by the improper use which was made of his name.

The precautions thus resorted to afforded an assurance that no farther religious intrigues could spring up except from the interior of France, and that it would then be much less difficult to repress it.

Subsequently to the arrest of the Bishop of Ghent many similar measures were adopted against parish curates in that diocese, as well as in the diocese of Tournay, and, as a necessary consequence, in the diocese of Mechlin. The archbishop of the latter was far from considering matters in the same light as the other two prelates; but their vicinity had had such a baneful influence over the curates and inferior clergy of the diocese of Mechlin, that the greater number were as much the enemies of their metropolitans as of the Emperor himself. They exerted their ministry for no other object than to alarm the timorous consciences of the country people, and shake their fidelity.

All these measures, however, were of an administrative

nature, and were taken in consequence of information given by the local authorities. The Archbishop of Mechlin has repeatedly interceded with me in behalf of his clergy; and yet those senseless men were impressed with the idea that he was the author of their misfortunes.

CHAPTER XIII.

Diplomatic intrigues—Neapolitan agency—Murat—His letters must be found deposited in the archives—Journey to Holland—Sentiments which agitated the several classes of the nation—Affairs of Spain—Constant passage of Neapolitan couriers—One of them is forcibly carried off.

THE meetings of the council in Paris had sufficiently engaged public attention to furnish matter for all kinds of conversation, and consequently to become the subject of much correspondence, especially on the part of diplomatic envoys. They afforded an opportunity of discovering some intrigues much more deserving of contempt than of serious attention: that, however, which was most calculated to excite astonishment, was a little agency of news which the King of Naples had deemed it advantageous to set up in Paris. The more the subject was considered, the less necessity could there be found for that insignificant kingdom being possessed of other means of correspondence than such as its legation afforded; and this conviction made it incumbent to seek for the motive of what was going forward. It naturally presented itself. The Emperor ordered the minister for foreign affairs to send off all the Neapolitan officers, Frenchmen born, who were attached, under various pretences, to the embassy of that country, which he resolved should be reduced to the individuals who were Neapolitans in the strict sense of the word, and who

had originally composed it. He no doubt intimated this arrangement by means of his official organ; and it was carried into effect, notwithstanding the numerous complaints of that crowd of young men who were unwilling to quit Paris. It was in some cases found necessary to use coercive means in order to enforce obedience.

Whilst this measure was carrying into effect, the Emperor, whose foresight anticipated every thing, had received certain complaints from Spain, in consequence of which he directed the arrest of a chamberlain of the King of Naples, who had not left Paris. His directions were obeyed; and an examination took place of the chamberlain's papers, amongst which were found nineteen letters in the King of Naples' own handwriting. There could no longer exist any doubt, after the perusal of these documents, that whether the idea had originated with himself, or whether it emanated from the brains of some of the persons in his service at Paris, this Prince seriously entertained the hope of succeeding to the Emperor, in a given case, that of his death for instance. As the Emperor had not any children at this period, the King saw, that to succeed to the inheritance, he had only to remove his nephews; and he had so far deceived himself as to suppose that, in the state of things of which he anticipated the occurrence, the nation would not feel any repugnance at enlisting under his banners.

In all his letters, he recommended to his chamberlain to have frequent intercourse with M. Fouché; to complain of his having so long neglected him; and to say that he always felt inexpressible pleasure at hearing from him. Most of those letters were dated in 1809, and had been written whilst the Emperor was at Vienna, and the English had possession of Flushing.

I handed the letters to the Emperor, who did not open his mind to me respecting them, but ordered the chamberlain to

withdraw to the estate he had in France, unless he preferred returning to Naples.

The style of that correspondence was no enigma to me. I found the true key to it in the many injunctions it contained; and felt more than ever convinced that the project of succeeding to the Emperor was deeply rooted in the mind of the King of Naples, who had never relinquished it until the birth of the King of Rome. I entertained the impression that his obstinacy in insisting upon retaining about the person of his ambassador in Paris a host of gallant youths, all military men, was nothing more than a precaution on his part, for the purpose of obtaining correct information of the personal dispositions of the individuals holding high employments, of whose concurrence he would have stood in need if the event had come to pass which was a previous condition to carrying his views into effect. I also explained to myself the reason of his having taken so much umbrage at my nomination to the ministry of police: he was apprehensive of my discovering that of which he compelled me to take cognizance; for whatever were my private opinions on the subject, I had never before attended to it.

He was apprehensive of my finding something of importance amongst M. Fouché's papers; and it occurred to my mind that my predecessor had consigned a part of the papers of his closet to the flames, with the view of burying those intrigues in oblivion.

The Emperor, however, did not fail to remark that M. Fouché had never spoken to him of the correspondence of the King of Naples, nor of its object, which could not be doubted by any reasonable mind after reading the contents of that prince's letters to his chamberlain. When this chamberlain was set at liberty, I ordered that the nineteen letters written to him by the King of Naples should be deposited in the archives of the police. Unless they were burnt in the

month of February, 1813, they are probably still in the same place.

The discovery explained to me several petty under-hand dealings, which I had formerly considered as mere idle talk, but which were afterwards viewed in a much more serious light. Nothing should be held in the light of trifles in matters of police superintendence. The smallest trifles often lead to the most important consequences. Whenever great events are brought about otherwise than step by step, they always fail, unless there should be a total want of vigilance on the part of the police.

These affairs were hardly blown over when the Emperor undertook a journey to Holland, in which he was accompanied by the Empress, who was perfectly restored to health.

He proceeded from Paris to Antwerp, from thence to Amsterdam and Rotterdam, and returned along the banks of the Rhine, after he had seen in Holland whatever was calculated to gratify his insatiable desire of personally inquiring into every thing.

This journey presented to an attentive observer many objects worthy of exciting his interest. The lower classes amongst the Dutch displayed some enthusiasm on the Emperor's appearing among them: the rich did not much regret the annexation of the country to France. Commerce alone was absolutely at a stand; and for Holland this is an object of serious consideration. Commercial people view all state questions with perfect indifference. Provided they throw no obstacles in the way of their operations, it little matters to them who is at the head of the government, since they have always their own burden to bear. In the present instance, it was obvious to the commercial class that so long as the system remained unchanged, it was necessary to give up navigating the seas—the most grievous of all sacrifices; but as there was no possibility of evading it, it became necessary to bear, even with a good grace, so severe an infliction.

I could only repeat in this chapter what I have already stated respecting the annexation of Holland.

When the Emperor was going on any journey, he was always addressed by the heads of the civil authorities of the countries through which he travelled. In the first years of his government, all the addresses displayed a natural style and tone of language, suitable to the respect due to the chief of the state, and to the dignity of the magistrate who uttered it. But as it is in human nature for one person to act differently from his neighbour, the repetition of the same things became tiresome: an attempt was made at more elevated language. Rhetorical figures and historical quotations were adopted. Every resource of this art had, in short, been so completely exhausted, that Paris was called in to assist in supplying fresh ones. Addresses were ordered from the capital, so as to be received in time for the day on which they were to be delivered. The Emperor having been informed of the circumstance, would no longer suffer any to be uttered in the journeys he had to perform; or he would cut the orator short as soon as he perceived that a ready-set language was held to him. He had no desire to hear what was not a candid and spontaneous expression of feelings. The Dutch, more than any other people, had adopted those means; and this was the only time they were disappointed in the expectations entertained of their effect.

The Emperor had brought in his suite his ministers of the marine, of the interior, and of the finances, in order to clear up on the spot the numberless difficulties which he foresaw would necessarily result from the crowd of applications which he expected to receive. They returned direct from Amsterdam to Paris; but the Emperor ascended the Rhine as far as Mentz. During his journey to Holland, the diplomatic communications had followed their customary course. In France an approaching rupture was expected; because the Emperor sent orders from Holland to the two regiments of

carbineers, which had recently returned to their quarters at Luneville to proceed to the Rhine, where he was desirous to review them. They accordingly joined him; and whether the review was merely a pretext for their march, or that their march was actually undertaken in contemplation of a rupture, they did not return to Luneville. They were quartered in the country of Berg, where they lived at a cheap rate. This measure was besides rendered necessary, by a slight insurrectionary movement in that country; added to which, it was, under any circumstances, so much distance performed, although not exactly in the direction of Poland. The movement was made known in Paris, and could not therefore be kept a secret from St. Petersburg.

The intercourse was kept up by mere outward forms of politeness; and when coldness takes the place of close friendship, disunion soon follows. The only difficulty is in the first falling off: when the ice is once broken, animosity is not long in making its appearance.

No extraordinary event had taken place in any quarter. In Spain, the armies were engaged in carrying on a few insignificant sieges, and in consolidating themselves. The blockade of Badajoz had been raised in the month of June of the present year, as I have already mentioned.

The army of Andalusia was before Cadiz. Nearly the whole of Spain was occupied; but neither orders nor obedience could be enforced beyond the spot where our troops were stationed. Even there the King's commands were set at nought; and this prince, tired of hearing the complaints of the Spaniards, whose condition he felt it impossible to relieve, had ended by not interfering in any thing: so that this unfortunate country was divided into as many vice-royalties as there were generals in command of particular districts. To add to our misfortunes, few of them were free from the animadversions of the Spaniards. These local vexations

gave rise to a state of exasperation, which converted the war into one continued system of massacre and plunder.

There were but very few amongst the generals who kept their reputation untarnished in those unfortunate campaigns; and many insurgent Spanish generals have told me, that it was greatly owing to this circumstance that they, on their part, refused to listen to any accommodation; because, when they happened to enter places which had been occupied by our troops, they discovered that King Joseph's authority was not even alluded to; and that it was such and such general who issued orders, in respect to every branch of the administration: so that if they had yielded obedience, they would also have been placed under the command of a French general. They therefore preferred, as they said, to remain in their then existing situation.

The glory of our arms in that country has been greatly thrown back, in consequence of the Emperor being prevented performing a journey there. Every one would have returned to his duty, even before he had approached within a hundred leagues of the frontier. The Emperor was well aware of it, and was on the point of proceeding to that quarter, when the English succeeded in forcing Russia into a war.

A singular occurrence was taking place at Naples. The King had felt greatly offended at the measures adopted in respect to his chamberlain, and the young officers of the legation; and as he dared not find fault with the Emperor, he was loud in his complaints against his ministers.

The Emperor was still absent from Paris. I saw as many Neapolitan couriers arrive there, as if some important negotiation had been set on foot; and these couriers, who were mostly Frenchmen, executed commissions in almost every corner of Paris, after having delivered their ministerial dispatches to the Neapolitan ambassador.

I was well aware of their places of resort, and of the

grounds of so much punctuality; but my curiosity was not fully satisfied. The bad opinion which I personally entertained of the King's secret designs, and the absence of the Emperor, authorised me on the one hand to feel great mistrust, and on the other to exercise the greatest caution.

I gave orders that, under pretence of some awkward mistake, a Neapolitan courier should be arrested instead of another courier, and placed for a couple of hours at my disposal.

This bold measure was suggested to me by another circumstance. The report was freely circulated that, in a fit of spleen, the Neapolitan government had compelled all Frenchmen who had, at her solicitation, exchanged the French for the Neapolitan service, to have themselves immediately naturalised, or to return to France. The greater part left the Neapolitan army in consequence of this order. This act of the government, which either indicated insanity or a revengeful spirit, was not to be overlooked.

The first Neapolitan courier was not long in making his appearance; and my instructions were so judiciously carried into effect, that he was brought to my hotel. Those who conducted him there were, in fact, under the impression that they had actually committed a mistake, with the exception, however, of one person, who was in the secret of my intentions. They expected to be reprimanded; and received, on the contrary, some proof of my satisfaction. I opened every paper, even the ambassador's packet, and sent it back to him with so much haste, that he might have had doubts of its being any thing more than a mistake, if his experience had not told him otherwise.

Those dispatches communicated that the King of Naples entertained great uneasiness with respect to the Emperor's feelings towards him: since he could no longer be ignorant of the fact, that the Emperor had read many papers which reflected great discredit on the writer; and above all, since the com-

pulsory measure which required all Frenchmen to become naturalised or to return to France.

His mind was so much harassed at this idea, that he had just sent off the Queen to clear up a misunderstanding which had no other existence than in his own imagination. For a King of Naples, who had been seated on his throne by the aid of the Emperor's power, had only to remain quiet, and not to attempt making any more noise in Europe than was consistent with his political insignificance: he would never, in that case, have to apprehend being hurled from his throne by that hand which had thought proper to raise him to it. If, moreover, it had really been the object of France to make the King of Naples resign his crown, could he reasonably have entertained the idea of defending himself? such an enterprise would have covered him with ridicule.

If, therefore, he deemed it useful to his interests to induce the Queen to pay the Emperor a visit in Paris; the reason is, that he was sensible he stood in need of justifying his conduct, as none but madmen would attempt to persuade us, that in the position which he occupied he had any intrigue to apprehend; his whole object was to find out the extent of the Emperor's information respecting his proceedings.

This is the proper place for mentioning that the Emperor had already contemplated to separate the crown of Italy from that of France, and to bestow the former upon his successor: he only delayed making a declaration to that effect until the birth of a second son, who would have been King of all Italy. He had sometimes indulged with his friends in that pleasing hope; and as he treated the King of Naples as a man whom he considered to be inseparably linked to his system, the idea did not occur to him that he would ever dare to oppose his views, if the anticipated event should occur. Nevertheless, this was really the case.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Queen of Naples comes to Paris—Reception given to her by the Emperor—Anecdote of Malmaison—Approach of scarcity—Measures for preventing it—The Emperor opens the canal of Saint-Maure—He keeps the workmen employed—Project of offering the supply of Paris to the highest bidder.

THE Queen of Naples arrived in Paris previously to the Emperor's return from Holland. Her journey turned out to be one of pure enjoyments for herself, as well as for those who felt a pleasure in again seeing her; but it was to no purpose with respect to the King, whom the Emperor knew too well to entertain the least uneasiness about him, whatever might be his conduct towards his benefactor.

This circumstance tended still more to confirm my opinion that the mind of the King of Naples was constantly at work, and that in spite of himself he might be placed in positions of which he might not perhaps discover the danger. This is generally what happens to men who avoid appearing in their natural character; or who, having once failed, are always restless and uneasy.

On his return to Paris, the Emperor gave a most friendly welcome to the Queen of Naples, and personally attended to every thing that could be conducive to her comfort. I dare say he did not disguise from her his opinion respecting the conduct of the King her husband: nothing, however, transpired on the subject. The Emperor, who has been represented as a man of a naturally vindictive disposition, never took revenge of injuries in any other way than by conferring favours. I might quote many instances of his prodigality towards persons who repaid him with ingratitude; and I never knew him to forget the most trifling service. He sometimes inquired into the details of the domestic affairs of those in whose welfare he took a particular interest. This gave

occasion for the report of his feeling a curiosity to meddle in the private affairs of others: nothing could be more foreign from the truth. The fact was, he intended to perform certain acts of liberality; and when he received a candid answer to his questions, it seldom happened that he omitted to give substantial proofs of his friendly intentions. No one ever felt more pleasure in distributing gifts; but he shunned every expression of thanks, though he never failed to notice, and never could forget any want of gratitude.

I have a perfect recollection that when he was First Consul, he one day gave thirty thousand francs to each of his aides-de-camp. We were eight in number; and went in the evening to thank him, at a moment when he was alone in his closet at the palace of Malmaison. He received us as he would men who were acting a part by no means acceptable to him; and dismissed us from his presence in these words—"Another time, gentlemen, I shall not expose myself to such visits. I asked no thanks at your hands; well aware that what I did would not be lost upon your feelings, without there being any necessity for your coming to tell me so." He then added, in order to make up to us for this abruptness—"Go and enjoy yourselves; you are giddy fellows." He did not keep his word; for his liberality towards some of us has been carried even to prodigality.

Towards the end of October, the Emperor returned with the Empress to St. Cloud, where the King of Rome had remained during their absence.

The approach of scarcity was already beginning to be felt, and corn was to be obtained with great difficulty in the southern provinces. I was an eye-witness, on that occasion, to the activity of mind displayed by the Emperor, beyond what he had ever yet shown. He caused statements of the corn depôts to be laid before him, as he might have done in regard to those of the army. He very frequently, perhaps every other day, held a council to deliberate on the means of procuring

provisions, which was attended by all those who were summoned to bring to it the tribute of their knowledge and experience. The Emperor now found cause to regret his having discharged the company of provisions: the state counsellor, whom he had placed at the head of that administration, was M. Maret, brother of the minister secretary of state, and a very worthy man; but as he was not a capitalist, he could do no more than regulate the operations. The Emperor came forward with enormous sums of money, to enable him to keep up the supplies of Paris to their full complement. A most serious error had been committed, by applying to the use of the army the flour intended for the consumption of Paris; the granaries of which had been emptied for that purpose. If the Emperor had been absent during this crisis, great disorders would no doubt have occurred, because no one would have ventured to take the responsibility upon himself in money matters; and the minister of the public treasury would not have paid any checks drawn upon him without a previous authority from the Emperor. He had again, therefore, to attend to every thing on this occasion. But however great were the precautions he ordered to be adopted, however powerful the recommendation of his own example, he was again under the necessity of advancing enormous sums of money to the board of subsistence of Paris, with a view to keep bread down to a price proportioned to the labourer's daily wages; and of adding twelve or fifteen francs to the price of each sack of corn, in order that bread might maintain its price of sixteen sous for every loaf of four pounds. The result was, that bread became cheaper in Paris than in the country; from whence they came to purchase it in the capital, in order to re-sell it in the provinces: thereby increasing the consumption of the capital, and consequently the expenses of the administration, which was directed to keep bread down to a moderate price.

The Emperor felt uneasy at this state of things. He did

as far as it was in his own power to do, in order to afford relief to that class of the population for which bread is an object of primary necessity. It was but too evident, however, that no adequate resources were forthcoming; we accordingly passed a severe winter in Paris. Many robberies were committed; and although the number of economical ovens was augmented, for the purpose of dressing in the day-time an immense quantity of soup, which was distributed at a moderate price, it was found extremely difficult to avert the mischief to which those miserable beings are driven who are in danger of starvation.

Whilst the Emperor was using every exertion to keep the articles of subsistence which are of indispensable necessity for the poor at the lowest possible price, considering existing circumstances, he was also affording them the means of earning a little more money by their labour. He opened on this occasion the works of the canal of Saint Maure, near Paris. This canal was to unite the Marne to the Seine, by avoiding a circuit of four or five leagues, taken by the former river before it reached Charenton. A twofold advantage was in contemplation: the object in view being to line the canal with a quantity of mills, which, by accelerating the grinding of corn, would diminish the bakers' expenses, and therefore the price of bread in the capital.

These works were carrying on so near Paris, that the most indigent families might be engaged in them, and, in consequence of the Rumford ovens which had been erected, find means of subsistence on the spot.

Thus, after having had his meals, a workman still found himself with the greater part of his wages at the close of day.

With the same object in view, the Emperor accelerated the works of the canals of Saint Denis and l'Ourcq. It is well known that his plan was to join by a navigable canal the great basin of La Villette with the one which was being con-

structed in the moats of the Bastille, and likewise to connect that basin with the Seine by the canal of Saint Martin. These works are now completed; and the extension they have given to the commerce of the capital is a fact of general notoriety.

The monarch, whose genius could form such splendid conceptions, the details of which he followed up with mathematical precision, has a right to claim from us that we should venerate his memory.

The Emperor did not confine himself to procuring employment for field-labourers; he gave orders for cabinet-makers' and joiners' work in the Fauxbourg Saint-Antoine, as well as every other description of work, together with such articles as were required for the use of his armies. He was profuse in his distribution of money during the winter to which I allude. Never departing, however, from his accustomed regularity, he abstained from burdening the finances, and met with his own private funds the expenses of the articles of luxury he had ordered, and which he applied partly to the embellishment of the palaces and national museums, partly to making presents to a variety of persons; but he transferred to the budgets of the ministers, for the use of whose respective departments any of the articles were sent, those of the interior and of war, for instance, the sums they had severally cost. In this manner he filled his stores, relieved distress, and reached, without any serious accident, the end of a severe season, which seemed to presage the heaviest misfortunes. I have seen the amount of the sums which he disbursed for the mere object of paying the difference between the price at which he purchased corn, and that for which he ordered the bread to be retailed to the people. They appeared to me altogether exaggerated, exceeding, as they did, ten millions of francs. My intercourse with the administration at that period was such, as to afford me the conviction that notwithstanding such powerful assistance, we never could have extricated our-

selves from our difficulties had it not been for the extraordinary activity displayed by the Emperor on the occasion.

He was not blind to the fact; and he felt exceedingly displeased with the administrators of subsistence, who had nothing more to show than regular accounts and empty storehouses. It was accordingly his intention to revive and new-model the old company of provisions, which he would have established on the same plan as the bank, so as to be able to assist him, in case of need, with all the capital that might be demanded of it, without his incurring the risk of being deceived by some extensive stock-jobbing attempts, as on a former occasion in the year 1805. This project was not carried into effect, because he was again forced into a war.

It is truly disgraceful that a country like France should be exposed to a scarcity of corn. Those countries to which corn is imported from another hemisphere, the very deserts, are free from such a danger: in fact, nothing can be easier than to guard against the evil. But in order that a constant attention may be bestowed on the subject, it should be left to the exclusive management of interested parties, and not of administrators who are regardless of every thing else but their personal responsibility. The Emperor was well convinced of the truth of this remark, and had made up his mind to act accordingly.

It has been proved by a series of observations that France was visited with a scarcity every nine years, at irregular distances, more or less remote from each other, according as great events had more or less interrupted the communications. A scarcity had been experienced in 1802 or 1803, another in 1811, and it returned again in 1817.

The winter was sufficiently dull and barren of amusements; it exhibited none of those events which engross the attention of society, and passed away in dinners of pure ceremony, and with a very scanty run of pleasures.

CHAPTER XV.

The Prince of Benevento and his enemies — Case of imposture — Madame Auguste de Talleyrand has recourse to the Emperor—Decision which he adopts.

Prince Poniatowski came this winter to Paris. The Emperor had been so well pleased with his services during the campaign of 1809, that he showed him the most marked attention. He even recommended that he should be equally well received every where; and when he was on the point of returning to Poland, he presented him with three hundred thousand francs; and I think that, independently of this gift, he settled another estate upon him besides the one he had given him after the peace of Tilsit.

He was less bountiful to M. de Talleyrand. This prince had been of late the object of continual attacks. Some were more or less well-founded; others were evidently unjust. They arose out of a contest of jealousy and self-love. M. de Talleyrand could turn to good account the advantages which he possessed: he watched his opportunity; and when he had found out the extremity of the armour, he took ample revenge of his assailants by three or four flashes of his wit, which penetrated to the quick, and told with powerful effect. This irritated them to madness. Talleyrand laughed at the storm he had raised; and the attacks were poured upon him with additional violence: but as Talleyrand kept a society which the diplomatic envoys had retained the habit of frequenting, he was always prepared to retort, with an overwhelming advantage, all the darts that were aimed at him. He was at last taken by surprise, and became the sport of his enemies. I was not aware of the circumstance when the Emperor sent for me on a Sunday morning, and gave me a sharp reprimand

for keeping from his knowledge a fact relating to that diplomatist. "If," said he, "I have been correctly informed, I will take care to make him refund the three hundred thousand francs which he has promised to give."

This observation had for me all the mystery of an enigma. I waited until he should explain himself; and I learned that he was to receive after mass Madame Auguste de Talleyrand, who had arrived on the preceding day to prefer a complaint, for which purpose she had solicited an audience.

This young lady had come post-haste from Berne, where her husband resided as ambassador, to appeal to the Emperor's justice against an infamous act of M. de Talleyrand; and in order to avoid being refused, she had addressed herself to the wife of the minister, with whom her own husband kept up an official communication.

The Emperor, who had only learned this young lady's version of the story, was highly incensed at the recital. It fortunately happened that I knew the whole adventure of this alleged debt claimed of M. de Talleyrand. If the business did not altogether redound to his credit, it certainly was not of that guilty character which Madame Auguste imagined. I hastened to inform the Emperor of the manner in which the transaction had actually occurred.

When M. Auguste de Talleyrand, the French minister in Switzerland, determined to marry, he paid his addresses to a wealthy young lady of Orleans, and was accepted; but her relatives required he should bring a marriage-portion of three hundred thousand francs: without which condition they declined giving him their ward, who, as well as I can recollect, was also their niece. This was a prudent precaution on their part. As soon as she married, the husband necessarily acquired full controul over her fortune. It was but proper to insist upon his affording security for the proper management of it.

As M. de Talleyrand was not possessed of the three hun-

dred thousand francs, he came to relate his embarrassment to the Prince, who was at that time minister for foreign affairs. He requested he would lend him the money on his note of hand; and urged, in his own behalf, that he was very young, and that fortune must be very unpropitious to him, if he could not succeed in acquiring three hundred thousand francs in the course of his life. M. de Talleyrand not only lent him the money, on his written note, but exonerated him from all obligation to pay the interest.

This note remained in the Prince's possession until his pecuniary losses compelled him to part with it. He had another relation, whose name I suppress, because I have personal reasons to complain of him. This relation was greatly involved, and could not raise any money, although his situation was such that it became necessary for him to procure it, if he wished to avoid the most painful embarrassments.

He called upon M. de Talleyrand, and related his difficulties to him, requesting he would bear in mind that the name of their family might be disgraced for want of the assistance he so indispensably required.

M. de Talleyrand was placed in a perplexing position. He had just been assailed with failures of every kind, and had no other property at his command than the note of hand in question. He showed it to the applicant, saying that this was all he possessed, and that it had never before been brought to light. He observed to him that he had made no use of it when involved in personal difficulties, because an injury done to the character of the person who signed it would recoil upon himself. He desired him, however, to look out for a person who would lend money on security; and if he could succeed in finding one, to deliver him the note, reserving to himself, at the same time, the power to redeem it as soon as he might have the means of doing so.

M. de Talleyrand's relation accepted the offer, saying he had already discovered a money-lender; but the note had no

sooner been deposited by the Prince in his hands, than it was negotiated upon change, and presented to M. Auguste de Talleyrand for payment when due. The latter was not aware of these circumstances: he thought himself deceived, and suspected that M. de Talleyrand, whose difficulties had reached his ears, had been under the necessity of inflicting this severe blow upon him. On the other hand, Madame Auguste de Talleyrand was no longer a child: she had the management of her own affairs, and wished to know the meaning of the note. The answer to this question was evaded, it appears, by her being told that the money was a pure gift, which, according to a promise made, was never to be asked for; and that the alleged embarrassments of M. de Talleyrand had, no doubt, compelled him to break his promise. Madame Auguste could not suppress her indignation. She thought it extraordinary that the Prince should have lent himself to an act of imposture, of which she was the victim. She instantly took her departure, and hastened up to Paris to solicit justice at the Emperor's hands.

The Emperor could hardly credit such an act. He nevertheless suppressed his feelings: said nothing unpleasant to M. de Talleyrand, when he presented himself at the audience usually given after mass; but wrote to desire the archchancellor would take cognizance of the business; and M. de Talleyrand had to pay the forfeit of the imposture to which he had made himself accessary. He paid the three hundred thousand francs down; and Madame Auguste took the road back to Basle.

M. de Talleyrand was not slow in discovering that the Emperor evinced no disposition to deal leniently with him; but he took care not to show his feelings on the subject; and his conduct became marked with a still greater degree of circumspection.

CHAPTER XVI.

A misunderstanding breaks out between France and Russia—Recall of M. de Caulaincourt—War appears unavoidable—General considerations relating to the respective positions of the two countries.

EVENTS of far too great an importance were crowding upon the political horizon to admit of the consideration of minor objects of a local nature. There appeared little doubt of an immediate rupture between France and Russia.

The Emperor had recalled M. de Caulaincourt at his own earnest entreaty to be allowed to return to Paris. He probably foresaw the storm that was gathering, and was unwilling to be left in the alternative either of betraying his duties, or of being wanting in gratitude for the marked attention shown to him during a residence of nearly four years at the court of Russia. The Emperor himself was not insensible to the extreme delicacy of his ambassador's position; though I have heard him ascribe it, as well as the deplorable result of his mission, rather to the personal conduct of M. de Caulaincourt than to the force of events,* which Russia had been enabled to turn to her own advantage: whereas an ambassador of France ought to have given them whatever direction he thought proper, had he not suffered himself to be drawn from the high ground on which he stood on his first appearance at that court.

* I saw the Emperor, on his return from Elba, still greatly incensed at a letter written by M. de Caulaincourt to the Emperor Alexander, in which that minister denied having taken any part in the affair of the Duke d'Enghein.

This letter, which was published in the *Journal des Debats*, appeared to me to account for all that had happened, since it must have had the effect of placing our ambassador at Alexander's disposal.

The Emperor sent General Lauriston, his aide-de-camp, to replace M. de Caulaincourt at the court of Russia. This choice must have been acceptable to the Russians; but it was rather late for a new ambassador to study past events, and to avert the occurrence of future ones.

Previously to entering into a narrative of this war, I must relate how it was actually forced upon us: for as to our desiring or courting it, I might afford ample proof of the assertion, that nothing could be more opposed to the Emperor's views, if the plainest common sense were not sufficient to remove all suspicion of his having brought it upon himself, in the midst of the numberless difficulties he had then to contend with.

The powers of Europe were waging nothing short of a war of extermination against France, who no longer fought but in her own defence. She had come victorious out of all the attacks levelled against her existence; but the Emperor was sensible that it behoved her to contract a foreign alliance of an imposing character. He had sought an union with Russia, notwithstanding all the personal inconveniences to which such a determination might subject him, since the Grand-duchess Ann Paulowna was only fifteen years of age: nevertheless he gave up his own feelings to the consideration of the public advantage; and it must be admitted that there is hardly a private individual who would not have felt hurt at the reply given to the Emperor on that occasion.

The demand of the Princess Ann Paulowna in marriage was made privately from one sovereign to the other, and ought never to have transpired, since it never assumed an official character. I am moreover of opinion that every thing might have been amicably arranged; because, if Alexander's reply afforded some indications of mistrust, it had also the appearance of being dictated by candour.

The proposal could never have transpired unless one or other of the Emperors had spoken of it. It is not my object

to explain why the Emperor Napoleon's overture failed of success. Be this as it may, he had just formed a connexion with Austria; and the high policy of the first-rate powers of Europe must necessarily have felt the effects of the union he had thus contracted.

The fact is, that after having relinquished the immense advantages which the war had given us over the Russians, and done so for no other purpose than to obtain their alliance, we failed of securing it, although we had sacrificed to them the Turks and Swedes, our natural allies; and we were now forming a connexion with the Austrians, who appeared to be our irreconcilable enemies. Such a result could never have been expected, if the marriage of the Archduchess Maria Louisa had not been considered as a pledge that every feeling of resentment had vanished: such being the natural consequence of misfortunes which were yet of recent occurrence. The alliance was, therefore, cemented with Austria, and broken off with the Russians. So true it is, that in politics a single step beyond the strict limits which they prescribe not to exceed is sufficient to involve nations in inextricable difficulties.

The Emperor was anxious for the maintenance of peace in Europe: he could not alone effect this object, without keeping the nation continually under arms, and overburdening its finances. It had, moreover, been proved by experience, that this was not the means of avoiding war; but was, on the contrary, a ground of alarm for foreign states, and afforded them a pretence for recurring to arms whenever a favourable opportunity might present itself. The war of 1809 had also proved to him, that notwithstanding his alliance of Tilsit, he could not reckon upon the co-operation of Russia in his endeavours to maintain the peace of Europe. So far, consequently, from its being productive of any advantage to him, he was exposed to the attack of a coalition far more powerful than the preceding ones; whilst he, on the contrary, could no

longer enter upon the contest with forces as imposing as on former occasions.

The Emperor had spontaneously availed himself of the opportunity of contracting with Russia the only union which France had it in her power to form: he was desirous of fixing it upon the firmest basis; and his proposal, so far from being accepted, had been coldly received. Be the cause of this what it may, the result was but too obvious. The Emperor was, thenceforth, warranted in apprehending that there was no solidity in the alliance with Russia, which he had vainly flattered himself was firmly established. It was natural for him to suppose, that if such were the sentiments of Russia towards him, at the moment when he was endeavouring to form closer ties with her, the spirit of animosity must have greatly increased since his alliance with Austria. He was also fully aware of the important advantage Russia had over him, in consequence of the resistance he met with in Spain, which would undoubtedly become the pivot of a fresh coalition on the first favourable opportunity; because there existed no obstacle to a friendly understanding between the Russians and the Austrians, and particularly between the Russians and the Prussians. England, on the other hand, was too much bent upon the object of resuming her influence on the continent, not to have readily discovered this means of attaining her wishes.

The alliance of Tilsit had no other object in view than the humiliation of England, or, in other words, a general pacification, as England was the only existing obstacle to it. Peace was the constant aim of the Emperor Napoleon; who was too enlightened not to discover that the stability of his power, and his own safety, depended only upon peace.

England had, in full parliament, proclaimed a perpetual war; and she kept up to this principle. France, by connecting herself with Russia, had adopted the only means of attaining her own object.

From the moment that Russia drew closer to England, the very basis of the system was attacked; and the relative position of France and Russia towards each other became more alarming than ever. It was, therefore, a source of bitter regret to the Emperor, that greater ability was not displayed in the management of our affairs. He made every sacrifice, and exhausted every means of conciliation in his power, to bring the Russians back to the real interests of Europe. He failed in this struggle against the artifices of the British cabinet—against the irresistible efforts of a power which was fighting for its very existence, with the inexhaustible resources which the treasures and commerce of the world, and her aptitude for business, could not fail to place at her disposal.

Compelled, therefore, to embark in a war, the Emperor Napoleon had to make up his mind to it, and to leave in abeyance the important interests which called his attention to Spain. Into this war he was forced, with all the disadvantages of a position widely different from that in which he was placed previously to his alliance with Russia.

He had renounced all the advantages which the battle of Friedland was calculated to afford him. He had scrupulously fulfilled every condition to which he was pledged: whereas Russia failed in those conditions which were of most value to him,* which had alone induced him to form an alliance with her, and upon the observance of which he had too much depended.

Russia had gained by our alliance an augmentation of power and possessions, as valuable by their geographical position as by their extent. She had recruited her strength whilst we were engaged in the affairs of Spain, which would never have been entered upon, if any apprehension had been entertained of the possibility of again returning to the north.

* Sugar and coffee from Riga were publicly sold at Leipsic and Mentz.

Russia was declaring against us at a moment when to all our former difficulties were added those entailed upon us by the Spanish war.*

France being compelled to separate herself from Russia, could not conceive a more rational project than to establish a power which, independently of being her natural ally, might also possess sufficient strength to constitute itself, as it were, the balance between Russia, Austria, and Prussia: so that in the event of a coalition against France, that power, whose existence would have been inseparable from that of France, might make common cause with her, and bring to her assistance a mass of physical strength which would save her from the necessity of again placing her population under arms. The formation of such a power afforded the surest pledge of a permanent peace.

Every thing indicated that the object of France was to regenerate Poland: a country of great importance in respect to its population. Already united to us by a common language, by the same habits and recollections, its troops had acquired a glory which yielded in nothing to that of other countries: she had, moreover, been at all times the ally of France and of her allies.

Independently of these considerations, the portions of Poland which Prussia and Austria had obtained by the partition were already reannexed to her, with very few exceptions; and it had been recently stipulated with Austria, that in the event of the regeneration of Poland, the Illyrian provinces would be restored to her, in exchange for that part of Galicia which was still under the Austrian dominion.

* I recollect that, during my residence in Russia in 1808, I was engaged in a discussion at the palace of the Emperor Alexander respecting the merits of several officers of our army. The Emperor took a part in it, and addressing himself to me, in reply to my observations, "You are quite right," he said, "your master is unquestionably far superior to any one who ever commanded an army; but after him we shall see."

Nothing more remained, therefore, than to wrest from Russia the Polish provinces which she had seized upon.

The Russians kept up in Paris a system of spying to which I shall presently allude, and by means of which they had succeeded in acquiring a knowledge of the forces which France would bring into the field, if the war should actually break out. The Emperor then began to discover the truth of every thing I had formerly reported to him, respecting the motives of the stay of the Emperor of Russia's aide-de-camp in Paris; and he directed me to find out, by every means in my power, what were the channels through which he carried on his intrigues, and obtained his information. He took, at the same time, all the precautions which the gradual development of the Russian forces called upon him to adopt.

CHAPTER XVII.

Measures of precaution adopted by the Emperor—Schwartzenberg—General Jomini—Underhand attempts of Czernitchef—His artifices—Department of foreign affairs—The prefect of police—Act of malice—Discovery of the system of corruption organised in the offices of government—Michel—Means he resorts to for procuring the statements which he furnishes to Czernitchef.

FRANCE had been nearly drained of all the soldiers that could be demanded of her. The Polish troops were withdrawn from Spain, and sent to the duchy of Warsaw.

The Emperor called to his assistance all the troops he was able to collect from Naples to Bayonne; and as he thus left an immense space of country unprotected, he thought the best means of preserving it from an invasion would be to take along with him the Austrian and Prussian troops: the only ones which could give him any uneasiness if he had suffered a

reverse of fortune, as had been the case at Eylau in 1807. It was also necessary to foresee that when he would perhaps be about to crown his exertions at the close of the campaign, pretensions might be raised by the cabinets of Austria and Prussia which would render every thing problematical; and they would have had the greater advantage over him, as they would have been stationed with large forces in the rear of the French army, which might at that time have been at the farther extremity of Poland.

Such were the powerful considerations which made the Emperor determine to treat with Austria for the marching of a body of thirty thousand men, as auxiliaries to the French army; and with Prussia for fifteen thousand men. The latter corps was commanded by General Yorck; the former by Prince Schwartzenberg, who was then Austrian ambassador at Paris. The Emperor caused it to be proposed to him to take part in the campaign, as he was already acquainted with that officer, and had contracted habits of communication with him: he was greatly esteemed and courted in the society of Paris. The Prince declared that it would be flattering to him to serve under the Emperor's orders, and readily accepted the offer made to him. The Emperor then caused it to be intimated to the Emperor of Austria, that he should be happy to see the Austrian army commanded by Prince Schwartzenberg. Francis hastened to accede to his request; and Schwartzenberg went to place himself at the head of the Austrian corps, which was to co-operate with us. He united the title of commander-in-chief to the character of ambassador, which he still retained, and left a chargé d'affaires in Paris.

We had now reached the middle of February, and the Emperor's final arrangements were in great forwardness. He knew with the utmost accuracy the precise position occupied by each of the corps which were marching towards the Niemen.

The troops which were arriving from Italy passed through

the Tyrol, Bavaria, and Saxony, on their way to the Vistula: the others were marching from Holland and Hamburgh towards Berlin; and all the high roads were covered with implements of war.

The Russian legation and the aide-de-camp of the Emperor of Russia were still in Paris.

I had just ascertained, in a very positive manner, that this officer had been endeavouring to persuade General Jomini to go over to the Russian service.

This general enjoyed in the army the high consideration due to his talents as an historiographer: in this capacity he was attached to the staff of the Emperor, who set a high value upon his talents.

I was the more surprised at this proposal of the Emperor Alexander's aide-de-camp, as I did not think General Jomini had any reason to be discontented with his situation. The fact, however, was so clearly established, that I resolved to mention it to this officer. He did not exactly acknowledge, neither did he deny it; so that I saw he had really been spoken to. I threw out some hints as to the opinion which the Russians entertained of those who deserted their own country; and he disdainfully repelled all idea of such an act. The aide-de-camp of Alexander had even carried his impudence so far as to attempt to tamper with one of the chief secretaries of the Prince of Neufchatel, who, as every one knows, was the major-general of the army. His secretaries, had, therefore, access to the most important information. The Russian officer felt no hesitation in offering him a large pecuniary bribe, if he would consent to enter into communication with him during the course of the campaign, assuring him that he would not have to incur any risk; care would be taken that he should never have to dispatch any couriers; and messengers would be sent to him on whom he might place the most unbounded reliance.

The secretary refused, and had sufficient consideration for

the Russian officer not to make publicly known his proposal, which would have ruined his character in Paris; but he gave an intimation of the circumstance to the Prince of Neufchatel, who communicated it to the Emperor on the very day on which I reported to him the particulars to which I have recently alluded. The Emperor clearly saw that the stay of that young officer in Paris had no other object in view than to organise a system of corruption about his own person. He expressed some displeasure at his having been so strongly recommended to him, as to induce him to intimate a wish that he should meet every where a friendly reception. A feeling of vexation always accompanies the conviction of having been deceived.

The young Russian officer had on this occasion so completely taken advantage of the kindness of the minister with whom he was in official intercourse, that he had actually become a little power in himself, and acquired an ascendancy which it was not safe to resist.

The Emperor shrugged up his shoulders at the idea that he should have been urged to bestow so much attention upon a person so little entitled to it, and ordered that he should be sent away to St. Petersburg. I have just stated that the Russian aide-de-camp had acquired an ascendancy which it was not safe to resist. The following story will show to what extent it was carried:—Although the Emperor had forbidden, at the time, that Czernitchef's movements should be watched, I had, nevertheless, ordered that the police of the quarter where he lived should keep an eye upon him. The commissary, in attention to my injunctions, tried to introduce as an inmate of the furnished hotel in which that officer resided an agent of police, whom he directed to watch all those who came to see him. Whether the business was ill-managed, or whether the agent was betrayed, the Emperor of Russia's aide-de-camp raised a great clamour against this uncourteous behaviour. He hastened to complain to his protector; and

the latter went to mention the subject to the Emperor, who gave me a severe reprimand, saying, "Take no notice of the Russian officer: M. Maret has his eyes upon him, and has succeeded in placing near him a person who watches all his movements: we shall see the result: leave him to M. Maret's care."

This happened a very few days before I received orders to watch the habitual occupations of that foreigner.

The greater the difficulties thrown in my way, the more I was persuaded that every one was deceived by this young man, whose conduct I was determined to unravel, whatever obstacles I might have to encounter in the attempt.

The spy who had been placed in his house never saw any one enter it; and yet the criminal proceedings on the trial which followed the discovery of the system of espionage he had set on foot, have clearly proved that the young man who forfeited his life in the attempt went every day, at the same hour, not only to Czernitchef, but also to Prince Kourakin, the Russian ambassador. I had a secret presentiment that the watch over him was ineffectually kept; and yet the case was of so serious a nature that I resolved to clear it up.

I knew that the Emperor Alexander's aide-de-camp was about to take his departure, and that every one was getting dispatches in readiness. Men of all characters and descriptions are to be met with in Paris. I had of late found out one who knew the secret by which letters were shut up with certain padlocks, called *à la Reynier*. Had not the aide-de-camp left Paris, I should probably have become acquainted with whatever was contained in the press in the wall close by the chimney of his apartment.

By means which it is unnecessary to divulge, I at last succeeded in obtaining possession of the whole contents of the Russian officer's dispatch, dated 21st February, 1812. I drew out of his portfolio the report he addressed to the Emperor of Russia, with its accompanying letter; the copy of

the instructions given by the Emperor two days before to the director-in-chief of the war-department, on the subject of forwarding the military equipages of the army; and lastly, a summary of the organization of the grand army, in different corps, according to the orders given to the Duke de Feltre, minister of war. I first determined to ascertain whether I was not myself the dupe of some snare laid to entrap me; and I repaired to the Emperor, who admitted his having recently given the orders in question. The originals appeared to have been copied verbatim. I no longer, therefore, felt any hesitation; and ordered the police of Paris to remove every obstacle * that might prevent their reaching the aide-de-camp's apartment, as soon as he should have stepped into his carriage, on his way back to Russia. I directed the seizure of every paper, whether old or new, which might have the appearance of a letter, or any other like form, and the rigid examination of every spot; and I particularly desired that every paper should be brought to me the moment it might be discovered.

On the day of the departure of the Russian officer, it occurred to me to pay a visit to the prefect of police, with whom I lived on terms of friendly intimacy. I found him closing a letter to my address, in which he sent me copies of all the written papers found in the apartment of the Emperor of Russia's aide-de-camp: the originals were on the table, and ready to be sent to the Duke of Bassano, the minister for foreign affairs, who had asked for them. Though I could not but feel hurt at what a mere accident had enabled me to discover, I was not surprised at it: but would only allow the copies to be sent, and kept back the originals. This happened on a Thursday. There was to be a short representation at the Elysée, †

* Because the agents of police are generally refused admittance into the houses where they present themselves.

† Since the arrival in France of the Empress Maria Louisa, the Emperor had ordered these short representations every Thursday, in order that she might form an opinion of the talents of the best actors in the capital.

and I went there one of the first, in order to converse with the Emperor previously to the opening of the performance. He had not yet dined when I arrived, and had just sent for me; so that I had not to wait any time before I should be presented. He handed me certain papers, and said—"Minister of police, look at these papers: you never could have discovered the intrigues of that Russian officer; but he was unable to escape the vigilance of the department for foreign affairs."

I opened the packet in his presence, and recognised all the copies I had seen two hours before at the office of the prefect of police, and of which I had carried away the originals. I discovered, however, that the papers now shown to me were transcripts of the said copies, sent, no doubt, because it was foreseen that the Emperor would transmit them to me, and that I would know the writing of the prefecture of police. This little piece of deception would not have been carried on with so much care, had it not been for the apprehension felt that the Emperor would learn how those papers had been obtained. It

Very few persons were invited to these representations, which were followed by a few games at cards.

The Emperor was very fond of music, especially Italian singing: he said that music afforded him a relaxation, and operated a physical change upon his mind.

He took a warm interest in conversing with any celebrated professors. I have often found him engaged in long conversations with the celebrated Paësiello, with Lesueur, and with Lays, the first singer at the Opera. Whilst conversing with them on subjects relating to their profession, they engaged his attention no less than other topics of conversation would do which he might be discussing at other times with Messrs. de Laplace, Fontanes, Chaptal, Monge, or Bertholet.

He was also fond of conversing with Talma, who was allowed the privilege of waiting upon him at his hour of breakfast. This celebrated actor seldom missed paying him a visit on the day after he had performed one of the high tragic characters, for which he must ever remain unrivalled.

The Emperor was passionately fond of tragedy, and of every thing which appeals to the soul.

He was very generously disposed towards men of talents; and never, even under Louis XIV., were professional men rewarded with such prodigality as under his reign.

was attempted to persuade him that the discovery had been made by other means than the ministry of police in Paris.

The letter of the minister for foreign affairs was annexed to it. He hastened to send to the Emperor the copy of whatever had been found by his agents at the residence of the Russian officer; adding, that the result of the inquiry must infallibly lead to the discovery of the traitor; and, in order to save time, the originals had been kept back.

The letter was so worded, as to lead to the belief that every thing had come to light through the zeal of the department for foreign affairs, though this was not broadly asserted.

I greatly astonished the Emperor when I showed him the originals of those copies, and explained how and through whose means the discovery had been effected. I did not disguise from him the trick I had played to the foreign department, by rendering it necessary they should send the copies instead of the originals.

I told him what, indeed, I had but just ascertained, that this pretended superintendence of the foreign department was nothing more than a little act of complaisance on the part of the prefecture of police, which I had ordered should cease for the future.

A man of M. Maret's talents might have found other means of ingratiating himself into favour; and he might have commanded an unbounded credit, possessed as he was of mental resources well calculated to embrace those mighty events which futurity was rapidly unfolding to our view.

Amongst the papers seized in the apartment of the Emperor of Russia's aide-de-camp was a letter directed to him, in which he was desired to be at home the next morning at eight o'clock, when some important document would be brought to him: this was a general statement of the army, with each corps distinctly enumerated, as well as their respective strengths, and a particular detail of each branch of service.

The letter, though hastily penned, did not appear to be in a disguised hand-writing: it was found under the rug near the chimney. There was no accounting for its having been left there.

After having long searched in vain, I found in the offices of the war-department a clerk who recognised the hand-writing, and told me the name and profession of the writer, another clerk, attached to the administration of the war-department. I sent for him, and exhibited the letter he had written to the Russian officer. He admitted it, confessed his intercourse with him, and drew up a declaration of all the entreaties and promises resorted to for the purpose of inducing him to connect himself with some of his comrades in the office specially relating to the movement of the troops in the war-department. He had yielded to the seductive arts of the Emperor of Russia's aide-de-camp; and delivered him a copy of all the orders issued by the Emperor to that branch of the service.*

From the office relating to the movement of the troops emanate all orders for the march of the soldiers, the generals, and the inferior officers. The labours, in short, of every other department eventually merge into this office; which drew up every fortnight, for the Emperor's information, a general statement of the army, with the changes which had occurred in the interval. This statement formed a large quarto volume, which was usually bound up previously to its being sent in. As the most rigid severity will always, sooner or later, relax, they had at last been so neglectful at the office of the minister of war as to send the book to the binder by an office-messenger, a veteran soldier, who was directed to wait until it was bound, and bring it back with him.

The clerk, who had been bribed by the Russian, took ad-

* This clerk had first become connected with the Russian officer, under the pretext, on the part of the latter, of taking lessons of writing, which the former was in the habit of giving in town.

vantage of this circumstance: he placed one of his comrades in the way of the old soldier. They appeared to meet by mere accident. The messenger was taken to a tavern, where, whilst he was in a state of intoxication, his book was taken from him, which consisted of sheets arranged in order, but not tied together: it was carried to an adjoining room, where one or two clerks waited in readiness with ruled paper, upon which they had only to copy the figures. This business was the sooner dispatched, as the paper was of the same form, and arranged in the same order, as the original statements in the book.

By such simple means the Russian legation obtained regular statements of our army, which the minister of war imagined to be only known to himself; since he had in his pocket the key belonging to the double lock of the desk in which they were kept. This unfortunate clerk was not the only one who afforded information to the Russian legation, although he contrived to explore for them the offices of the two ministers of war. There were other traitors involved in his perfidious proceedings. He forfeited his life for the act of treachery of which he was convicted, having been condemned to death by the criminal tribunal of the department of the Seine.

Had it not been for the ridiculous obstacles set up against me, I should have discovered this plan of corruption six months before; and perhaps Russia would not have set on foot so formidable an army as she was led to do on ascertaining the extent of our own armaments. Such, however, was the fatality of the times, that the minister for foreign affairs pretended also to exercise the duties of minister of police.

This discovery was rather a source of uneasiness to me than otherwise, as I foresaw all its consequences, and as it gave me a very poor opinion of the degree of prudence with which matters of the highest importance were conducted. I could not help reflecting that if the same importance had been

attached to the object of penetrating the enemy's movements, such a course could not have failed to be attended with success.

The proceedings on the trial effectually proved that the system of bribing in the war-departments, in behalf of the Russian legation, had been organised before the campaign of 1805, and was kept up during the wars which had sprung up since that period.

This was, assuredly, an object deserving of the most serious consideration.

The Emperor was highly displeased at the act of treachery discovered in one of his offices ; and said to me on that occasion, whilst speaking of the Emperor of Russia's aide-de-camp, " I had already warned the young man that, if he continued to act that part, I could no longer admit him into my presence ; and he gave me his word that he would abstain in future from such conduct. It was incumbent upon me either to believe, or to refuse seeing him." The statements, however, have not furnished him with any very satisfactory result ; meaning, that the numbers borne upon them exceeded the reality.

The Russian aide-de-camp had not yet crossed the frontier when the discovery was made. It was easy, by means of a telegraphic message, to procure his arrest at Mentz ; but this course would have subjected him to too great a humiliation, because the criminal tribunal would infallibly have summoned him as evidence on the trial of the clerks in the war-department ; and his character must have suffered in consequence of such an exposure.

The Emperor approved of this forbearance, which was, however, lost upon the Russian officer. His expressions on the occasion were even of such a nature, as to cause a regret that he should have been spared the disgrace of being held up to his fellow-countrymen in a character that must have been injurious to his future prospects.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Christening of the King of Rome—Fête given by the city of Paris—The Empress—The Emperor clears his closet—His private instructions to the author previously to his departure—Measures taken to ascertain the state of public opinion—A minister of police must act with gentleness—Particular view which the Emperor takes of the war.

THE facts I have just related took place in the month of March, 1812. The Emperor had gone to Compiegne, which he preferred to any other residence, owing to the facility it afforded him for exercise. Another reason for his preferring a residence far removed from Paris was, that he was mostly alone, and therefore better able to attend to state affairs.

He must have drawn up his plan of operations in the month of March; since he was staying at Compiegne when he received from Berlin the ratification of the alliance between Prussia and France. The Russians were astonished at this treaty; having reckoned upon Prussia, though not at all upon Austria, which had but very recently entered into a treaty with us.

These several alliances had the effect of placing the Emperor at the head of an immense army, composed of all the military states of Europe, excepting England, since it numbered Spanish and Portuguese soldiers in its ranks. If there ever was a circumstance in the whole course of his life in which he had to call the power of physical force in aid of the inspirations of the most elevated foresight, the present was assuredly the most favourable opportunity for doing so. Nothing, therefore, could be more rational than to take advantage of the times for the purpose of operating those changes in Europe which were so loudly called for.

If the enterprise had been successful, the Emperor would

have been extolled far above the rest of mankind, because the pages of history could have presented no parallel for so immense an operation. All those who, at a later period, became his enemies, would then have acted the parts of humble adulators. Fortune not having proved true to the object so recently the theme of unbounded admiration, the most malignant attacks have embittered his fall.

Previously to quitting Paris, for the purpose of opening the campaign, the Emperor had his son christened, the child being then nearly thirteen months old. He left Compiegne for Paris on the occasion of this ceremony, which was performed in the church of Notre-Dame towards the end of April, 1812.

It was of the most brilliant description. The Emperor and Empress repaired to the church in great pomp, accompanied by the cortege which is customary in all public ceremonies, and were received at the threshold of the cathedral by the archbishop and all his clergy.

The cathedral was filled with spectators, who never ceased to cry *Long live the Emperor and Empress!* from the moment of their entering the church until they quitted it. Their majesties proceeded from thence to the Hotel-de-Ville, where the city of Paris had prepared a dinner, according to a very old custom, which has been strictly adhered to on the occasion of the christening of any heirs to the throne.

The city of Paris deserved the highest praise for the splendour of the feast, the sumptuousness of the service, and the profusion of every article of luxury. It was a day of general feasting, the city having caused provisions to be distributed to the people.

The fountains were filled with wine, and dancing was kept up the whole night. The large court of the Hotel-de-Ville had been transformed into a spacious apartment, by means of a strong frame-work. This work supported a floor, on a

level with the windows of the first story of the hotel, which had been converted into doors, for the purpose of communicating with the side apartments.

It would have been difficult to bring together a more brilliant company than this numerous assemblage of citizens. The Emperor eagerly sought every opportunity of mixing and conversing with them. The Empress, though still very young, bore the fatigues of this imposing ceremony with her wonted kindness. She had need of great patience, as, on making the round of the immense assemblage of company, she had to repeat, over and over again, in all its variations, the little court-phrase which applies to all and to every thing. To this she added expressions which could not fail to win her the hearts of those who might have otherwise formed an unfavourable judgment of her, owing to an air of cold reserve, which was to be ascribed to the timidity natural to her youth and to her excessive modesty.

Her voice was no sooner heard, than she drew all hearts after her. Her success in France was entirely her own work; for I can solemnly attest that the ministry never employed any underhand means of securing applause on her appearance in public. Whenever she went to the theatre, or to any ceremony, the superintendence of the administration was limited to the object of preventing any infringement of the strict rules of propriety: nothing farther was ever attempted. When, for instance, I knew that she intended visiting a theatre, I took the precaution of engaging all the boxes facing her own, besides others, where the company might have incommoded, her by fixing their eyes upon her. I then sent the tickets of those boxes to respectable families, who were glad of the opportunity to occupy them. I acted in the same manner with respect to the company in the gallery, on the nights of the Empress going to the theatre.

I never adopted any precautions to secure the applauses of

the pit. The Empress Maria Louisa had the practice, on her appearance in public, to make three such graceful curtsies, that the last was invariably preceded by long and loud applause. She took care to save me any trouble on the subject.

After the ceremony of the christening of the King of Rome, the Emperor went to reside at St. Cloud, and remained there till his departure for the campaign of 1812.

Previously to quitting France, he disposed of every public business which required his presence. This was his practice whenever he undertook a journey. He generally had a private conversation with each minister for the purpose of giving his special instructions, when he was desirous of any business being carried on without farther correspondence with him. He never overlooked the smallest details; they all appeared to him deserving of his attention; and when he came to the last week of his stay, he replied to all outstanding cases referred to him by his ministers. This is what he called *clearing his closet;* because he then solved a variety of questions, which had been long proposed to him, and were yet unanswered.

On the occasion of his departure, he conversed with me relating to every subject to which he was desirous I should attend during his absence. This was a general instruction on his part, and by no means so severe as it was supposed to be by men whose whole life has been engaged in representing him as a tyrant, devoid of every sense of justice, and of all kindly feelings; and yet these were the qualities for which he was most conspicuous. He felt particularly beholden to any one who would afford him an opportunity of doing an act of justice; and as he was never wearied of granting favours, so there could be no hesitation in soliciting them.

I do not pretend to deny that many acts of his administration have been vexatious to individuals, and even ruinous to some families. There are few, however, respecting which I might not fully acquit him from blame, as all the severe

measures which he resorted to under peculiar circumstances had been recommended and urged beforehand in official reports addressed to him by persons in whom he had confided for making the truth known to him, and for proposing whatever remedies were most calculated to remove the subjects of complaint. This was especially the duty of the Council of State, to which he referred every matter connected with the law of the land, the administrative departments, or the law of nations. He had moreover given to a few individuals * the permission to write to him confidentially on the general state of public opinion, as well as respecting the impression created by certain acts of his government. It was impossible to adopt greater precautions for avoiding whatever might give it the appearance of having a tendency to tyrannise over the people; and there is reason to believe that if those who were honoured with his confidence had shown a faithful attachment to his service, no one would have had to complain of the slightest injury.

Nothing, however, is more common than to meet with men who are apprehensive of telling unpleasant truths, or who can only tell them in an unpleasant manner. Thus it is that failing in the object for which they were placed in communication with the head of the government, they have generally wandered into metaphysical subtilties, instead of letting him know those facts which appeared to be no secret to any one but himself. They failed to discover that when the Emperor called for information, it behoved them fearlessly to force their way through intrigue, envy, courtiers, and every species of adulation, and make the truth known in the very heart of palaces, from whence it seems to be for ever discarded. The Emperor was probably aware of this when he took so much pains to be correctly informed; and I am fully persuaded that if a baneful influence had not succeeded in keeping at a distance all those

* They were all known to me.

who could have been of service to him, he would have been found at all times surrounded by the most enlightened men that France could boast of, who were constantly represented to him as his enemies, and who by the unwearied efforts of courtiers were eventually looked upon with an evil eye. That fatal influence had removed from his person the individuals who were most likely to offer useful suggestions; and I must openly declare that the Emperor never entertained any unfriendly intention towards those faithful servants which did not originate in some false report, the author of which is much more liable to blame for the consequences to which it led.

In the instructions given to me by the Emperor before his departure, I was particularly enjoined to be mild and considerate towards every one. He observed to me that there never came any good out of creating a feeling of hostility, and that in the ministry of police more than in any other, it was necessary to act with gentleness. He repeatedly cautioned me to avoid every arbitrary arrest, and to have always justice on my side in every measure I might adopt.

He spoke to me in this conversation respecting the war he was compelled to undertake; complained of not having been faithfully served, and of being driven to engage in a contest with Russia alone, in the present year, in order not to have to fight in the next against Austria and Prussia. He said that he now had a numerous army, fully adequate to the enterprise, whilst he might have to contend with inferior numbers on his side if fresh enemies should rise next year against him. He deeply deplored the confidence he had placed in those sentiments which had induced him to make peace at Tilsit, and often repeated these words: "Whoever could have saved me from this war would have rendered me an essential service: now we have it, we must extricate ourselves to the best of our power."

He hoped to employ his own army for no longer time than the first campaign, and to open the second with a Polish

army, which he would have raised on his way through the extensive provinces of Poland.

CHAPTER XIX.

Preparations for the Russian campaign—M. de Talleyrand—Speculations—Extraordinary council—Departure of the Emperor—Dresden—The King of Prussia—Operations of our armies in Spain—Baneful consequences of the independence of the generals.

FOLLOWING up the views he had entertained in 1807, it was the Emperor's intention to give a mighty impulse to the national character in Poland, towards which country he had forwarded all the resources of the French arsenals, which were emptied of their contents. Nevertheless, this immense quantity of warlike stores was unavailing to arrest the downfall of our unhappy country. Very little skill was displayed in carrying the Emperor's orders into effect: what he had collected at a heavy expense, and with great difficulty, was squandered away in a few weeks. The execution of all his mighty conceptions was intrusted to men who fancied they had done every thing that was required of them if they wrote a letter to one person, who was directed to write to another, and so on, without any farther trouble being taken to promote the success of the cause.

He meditated to establish in the very heart of Poland the power he was about to display in the present campaign. He had anticipated all the wants of his army, and had accordingly caused immense purchases to be made of all kinds of provisions, which were to be transported to that country. The same care was bestowed upon the clothing of the troops.

He had neglected none of the duties devolving upon him

as commander-in-chief of the army. If one half of the arrangements he had prescribed had been attended to, the army would have met with every comfort, and even found itself in a state of abundance at every twenty leagues of country, instead of experiencing, as it did, the severest privations.

It was the Emperor's wish to take M. de Talleyrand in his suite, for the purpose of giving to Poland the mighty impulse which he meditated. He recollected the effective services rendered by that diplomatist at Warsaw, in 1806 and 1807, and reserved for him the same part on the present occasion. M. de Talleyrand had even accepted the offer made to him. The Emperor, who foresaw that some intrigue would be set on foot, had enjoined him not to mention the subject; an injunction which was implicitly obeyed; but he gave to some bankers of Vienna certain orders, which the latter allowed to transpire. These orders, which might, perhaps, relate to mere private affairs, were spoken of in the world as a commencement of stock-jobbing, and reported as such by our minister at the court of Vienna. The Emperor felt much displeased at this rage for speculating: he mentioned it to me, saying that he was at a loss to comprehend such over-eagerness for money; and still more so, that the diplomatist should have thrown out any hint on a matter respecting which he had recommended the strictest secrecy. He could no longer, therefore, place any confidence in him, and must renounce the idea of availing himself of his services. This resolution, independently of the important reasons which had influenced it, was probably encouraged by the minister for foreign affairs. These two statesmen were not on the most friendly terms. M. de Bassano had even declared, that if M. de Talleyrand were employed, he would be under the necessity of declining to follow the Emperor, as he felt satisfied that every exertion would be made to defeat all the measures he might think proper to adopt, an impression which was not altogether mistaken; since M. de Talleyrand never

had the credit of being disposed to praise the successes of his former friends.

The Emperor, after having regulated, by an official order, the manner in which he required the business of government to be conducted during his absence, assembled an extraordinary council of ministers, at which the arch-chancellor and M. de Talleyrand were present. This happened at the beginning of May. He stated his intention to proceed that very night on his expedition, which terminated in a manner the more deplorable, as, in the event of its success, it would have been without a parallel in the pages of history.

The Emperor stated at this council the uneasiness which he felt at the possibility the English would attempt, during his absence, to carry the Pope away from Savona, and take him back to Rome for the purpose of creating an insurrection in Italy. He expressed his intention of removing him to Paris; but the members of the council whom he consulted were of opinion that he ought certainly to be removed from Savona, but not brought to Paris. The Emperor accordingly decided he should be removed to Fontainebleau, adding, that he would give orders on the subject; but that I was in the meanwhile to make the necessary arrangements to enable the holy father to travel with every comfort, but to avoid the noise and display of a journey which would afford so much food for conjecture.

He dwelt very little upon his intended expedition, and merely said that it was prepared on a mighty scale, and offered many difficulties, which he nevertheless expected to overcome. He kept the council sitting for some time, and took his departure for Dresden during the night. The Empress accompanied him on the journey, having expressed the desire of seeing her father, who repaired to Dresden, as well as the King of Prussia, and the Prince Royal, his eldest son.

This capital of Saxony afforded a second representation of the meeting at Erfurt. Each of the guests was unsparing in expressions of cordiality and regard for the Emperor, which could never have been taken for their parting farewell.

The Emperor remained a fortnight at Dresden: a valuable time taken from the short period of the fine season he had to spare from his campaign. He felt it necessary to give this proof of his desire to show the sense he entertained of the attentions of his allies. They were all fully aware of the Emperor's real object in opening the campaign, and none were found to hesitate a moment in following his fortunes. After that delay the Emperor took his departure for the banks of the Lower Vistula, which he crossed at Thorn, and from thence proceeded to visit Dantzic, and overtook his army then in full march towards the Niemen.

Previously to quitting Dresden, he had given to the Archbishop of Mechlin, who followed him as his almoner, the appointment of ambassador to the Polish government residing at Warsaw; to which city the prelate repaired with powers from the Emperor, and as the organ of whatever demand he might have to make to that government during the campaign. Upon him, therefore, devolved at Warsaw the part which had originally been intended for M. de Talleyrand, who had been left by the Emperor at Paris. M. de Bassano followed him in the character of minister for foreign affairs, and M. Daru as minister secretary of state.

The Empress left Dresden; and in order to indulge some time longer in the enjoyment of her father's company, she proceeded to Prague, where she remained a fortnight on her way back to Paris.

I now return to the narrative of the affairs of Spain.

After raising the siege of Badajoz, the army of Portugal protected the refitting of that place, and the repairs which its fortifications stood in need of. As soon as those objects were accomplished, it took up a position in the valley of the Tagus, with its head-quarters at Naval-Moral, and in readiness to move either upon Badajoz or Ciudad Rodrigo, according to the point the enemy might select for his attack. Ciudad Rodrigo was protected from that moment by the army of the

north of Spain, which occupied Salamanca with one of its divisions. The army of Portugal was thus placed between the armies of the north and of the south, and prepared to connect its operations with either, as circumstances might require.

Towards the month of August the English army crossed the Tagus, only leaving on the frontiers of the province of Alemtejo the second division, under the orders of General Hill; and it took up a position in the vicinity of Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo, with its light division on the other side of the river Agueda. Rumours were afloat that Lord Wellington intended laying siege to Ciudad Rodrigo, and that ammunition was collecting for that purpose. Marmont pushed some troops forward to the Col de Baños, and placed the greater part of his army between that Col and the Tagus, establishing his own head-quarters at Placentia, so as to receive early intimation of any occurrence, and to act with rapidity on an emergency. The month of August, and a great part of September, were employed in these movements. Ciudad Rodrigo was in want of provisions, and the army of the north of Spain was making arrangements to throw a considerable supply into the place, under the protection of a corps of twelve thousand men; but their numbers were inadequate to the attempt of approaching the English army with so large a convoy. It was necessary, therefore, to obtain the co-operation of the army of Portugal. Marmont put it in motion, for the purpose of supporting the advance of his corps, and of covering the convoy of supplies. A simultaneous combination was given to those movements. The army of Portugal debouched from the Col de Baños, and advanced to Ciudad Rodrigo, by Tamamès and Tembron; whilst the convoy, protected by the army of the north, proceeded by the road of San-Muños.

The whole corps of the northern army marched forward with the convoy. As the enemy did not oppose any forces to its advance, the infantry of the army of Portugal remained in

echellons on the road which it had taken, and the cavalry alone proceeded towards Ciudad Rodrigo. The object of this operation having been effected, another movement remained to be accomplished, which was to reconnoitre if the enemy had made any preparations for the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo. The hostile army not having been assembled, a strong reconnoitring would have had the effect of scouring the country, and of obtaining a knowledge of its intentions. The cavalry of the army of the north was ordered to move on the road from Almeida to Espeja, whilst that of Portugal marched upon El-Bodon. The infantry of the former having advanced as far as Ciudad Rodrigo, Marmont requested General Dorsenne to support the cavalry by one of his divisions. Our troops had scarcely quitted Ciudad Rodrigo, when a strong brigade of English cavalry was descried on the heights of El-Bodon, besides two brigades of infantry: they were, however, separated from each other, and could not act in concert. Marmont ordered General Montbrun to overthrow them, and take possession of all the heights with his cavalry: a movement which was immediately carried into execution. Repeated charges were made upon the infantry; but all in vain: for it retired in good order, after having resisted the renewed attempts made against it; and the two brigades succeeded in forming a junction at Fuente-Guinaldo, where some intrenchments had been thrown up. The division of infantry of the army of the north had remained at a considerable distance behind, and either neglected to execute, or had not received the orders that General Dorsenne was expected to have issued. It gave way at the moment when, being supported by Marmont's cavalry, it ought to have afforded the means of taking possession of Fuente-Guinaldo, the general rendezvous fixed upon by the English army. Night came on in the meanwhile, and prevented our troops from taking advantage of the critical position of that army. Having found it thus disunited, Marmont ordered all his troops to join him; but it

was impossible to collect them until the following night; and the English army had also brought up its scattered divisions, and taken a commanding position. Marmont was desirous of availing himself of the reinforcement of the northern army to offer battle to the English army; but it retreated in the night towards Sabugal. All he could do the next morning was to pursue it the distance of several leagues; but the English were already beyond the reach of our troops. The object of the junction had been accomplished, and a farther delay in the same position was no longer of any advantage. The two armies therefore resumed their cantonments, after having placed Ciudad Rodrigo in the best state of defence. The Duke of Ragusa feeling no longer uneasy respecting the fate of Ciudad Rodrigo, and being compelled to alter his position in order to subsist his army, made his troops penetrate into the valley of the Tagus, stationed his head-quarters at Talavera, and occupied Toledo, which was given up to him upon an order from the Emperor to that effect. Such, however, was in those unhappy times the spirit of infatuation exhibited by persons most interested in the operations of the army, that before King Joseph would deliver up that province to Marmont, and whilst the army which protected it, and alone enabled him to remain quiet in Madrid, was perishing with hunger, he ordered that the supplies of provisions which had been collected there with the utmost difficulty should be disposed of.

The troops of the army of Portugal were scarcely returned from the expedition to Ciudad Rodrigo, and established in their fresh cantonments, when the Duke of Ragusa received orders to send forward a strong detachment to afford support in case of need to Marshal Suchet, who was making preparations for attacking Valencia. This detachment was to open a communication for itself with the army of Arragon, and form a junction with it if it should be deemed necessary. The order was as follows:—

"Paris, 21st November, 1811.

"The Emperor desires me to inform you, Monsieur le Maréchal, that the capture of Valencia is an object of paramount importance at this moment. It is the Emperor's wish that you should send off a corps of troops which, after it shall have joined the forces about to be detached by the King from the army of the centre, is to advance upon Valencia, in order to support the army of Marshal Suchet until that city shall have fallen into his hands.

"You will cause this movement to be effected without delay, in conjunction with his Majesty the King of Spain, and inform me of what shall have taken place on the subject. It has been intimated to us that the sick of the English army amount to twenty thousand men, and that they have not that number of men left under arms, so that they are unable to undertake any operation: it is therefore the Emperor's wish that twelve thousand men, infantry, cavalry, and sappers, should immediately advance to Valencia; that you should also detach three or four thousand men to follow in the rear of that corps; and that you, Monsieur le Maréchal, should hold yourself in readiness to assist in the capture of Valencia. When this city shall have fallen into our possession, Portugal will offer a very feeble resistance; because, when the favourable season shall have returned, the army of Portugal will have been increased by twenty-five thousand men from the army of the south, and by fifteen thousand men of the corps of General Reille: thus amounting, when united, to upwards of eighty thousand men. In such a state of things, you would receive orders to move upon Elvas, and take possession of the whole province of Alemtejo, whilst the army of the north would advance towards the river Coa with an army of forty thousand men. The pontoon-train at Badajoz would serve for throwing bridges over the Tagus. The enemy would be wholly unable to oppose so strong a force; which offers every chance of success, without the smallest risk of failure. It is

therefore an object of primary importance to take possession of Valencia. We were masters of one of the suburbs on the 6th of November. There is reason to hope that the city will be captured in December: an event which would put it in your power to reach Elvas in the course of the month of January. Send me your opinion respecting this plan of operations, in order that, after the news shall have arrived of the capture of Valencia, the Emperor may give you positive instructions for your guidance.

"The Prince of Wagram and Neufchatel, major-general,

(Signed) "ALEXANDER."

It will not fail to be remarked that this letter of the 21st November could not reach Marmont until December. Berthier calculated upon the capture of Valencia in December. Of what use, then, could be the detachment which Marmont was directed to send off? The answer may be easily anticipated: it proved of no service to Suchet; tended to weaken Marmont; and placed Ciudad Rodrigo in imminent danger. I have heard the Emperor deeply lament the idea of ordering off this detachment.

The order, however, was of a positive nature. The Duke of Ragusa sent two divisions of infantry, and one of cavalry, under the command of General Montbrun, to accomplish the object in view; but the weak resistance offered by General Blake rendered superfluous this assistance; and the operation of General Montbrun went no farther than his advancing to Alicant, and returning in the direction of Toledo. The movement in question took place in the beginning of December.

On the 13th of December, 1811, the Emperor communicated to the Duke of Ragusa the fresh arrangements he had made; the main object of which was to enable him, in case of need, to withdraw some of the troops from Spain, and especially all the guards who were stationed in the northern pro-

vinces. According to these fresh arrangements, the marshal was to bring all his forces to the valley of Tormes, and his head-quarters to Valladolid or Salamanca. The provinces of Talavera, Avila, Valladolid, Leon, the Asturias, Benevente, Astorga, &c. were to be included in the district to be occupied by the army. The movements were to be executed without delay; and Marmont's army was to be increased by the 7th division, then at Salamanca, and the 8th, which was stationed in the Asturias.

On the 5th of January, 1812, Marmont moved forward all the divisions of the army of Portugal, to take up positions in the respective provinces assigned to them; and the troops marched, each corps in its prescribed direction. The whole of the *materiel* and of the artillery proceeded by the Guadarama. General Montbrun's division was carrying on its operations in La Mancha.

He arrived at Valladolid on the 8th of January, and bestowed all his care to those objects which the new plan of operations rendered necessary, and to the throwing fresh supplies into Ciudad Rodrigo, as well as relieving the garrison; which latter occurrence was to take place as soon as the army should have united.

On the 15th he received a letter from Salamanca, dated the 13th, which informed him that the hostile army had taken up a position in advance of the Agueda, had blockaded Ciudad Rodrigo, and was preparing to lay siege to it.

He immediately sent orders in all directions for the different columns to converge from their positions, and repair to Salamanca; calculating that the greater part of the army would be collected there by the 25th, and that he might consequently offer battle to the English army under the walls of Ciudad Rodrigo. He quitted Valladolid on the 18th, arrived on the 20th at Fuente-el-Famo, where he received the news of the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, of which the English army obtained possession on the 18th. Thus it

happened that this place, which had defended itself for five weeks against the French army, which was in a condition to resist any attack, and the strength of which had been augmented by a half moon, well calculated to protract the defence for a week longer, was compelled to surrender at the expiration of five days from the time of its being first invested. This occurrence deranged every combination. Marmont had only to take up a defensive position, which might enable him to collect all his troops on the first indication of an attack from the enemy.

The troops that were on the left bank of the Tagus being enabled to act on the right bank, under cover of the fortifications of Almaraz, and of the fort of Miravets, which secured the means of debouching on the plateau, and protected the road, succeeded in preventing the enemy from bringing their guns to bear upon Almaraz. The greater part of the troops extended from Avila to Valladolid and Zamora. Astorga was occupied: and a division was stationed at the pass of the Asturias, in the province of Leon. The Duke of Ragusa was unremittingly engaged in the erection of lasting fortifications at Salamanca, by means of three large convents, which were turned into three strong forts; and which, according to the system adopted, rendered it necessary to carry on a regular attack for several successive days. These fortifications were at the head of the position of the army of Portugal, and protected its magazines and depôts.

Such was the state of affairs when the English determined upon following up their offensive operations and advancing against Badajoz. Accordingly, after placing Ciudad Rodrigo in a state of defence, they effected a movement beyond the Tagus, leaving two divisions only on the Agueda. Marmont entertained a hope of arresting their progress by the position he had taken up. He was in communication with the left bank of the Tagus; his means of crossing the river were in readiness, and his provisions of all kinds collected at one

point: he expected that he might debouch in time to effect a junction with the army of the south, and either protect Badajoz from a siege, or cause it to be raised if it had already commenced. The Emperor was of opinion, that this system indicated too much pusillanimity; and he gave the most imperative orders to operate a diversion in the north of Portugal, with the view of drawing off the main part of the English army to that quarter. The dispatch transmitted by the major-general was worded as follows:—

"Paris, 18th February, 1812.

"His Majesty disapproves of the direction you are giving to the war. You have a superiority over the enemy; and instead of striking the first blow, you suffer him to be beforehand with you. General Hill's advance against the army of the south, with fifteen thousand men, is the most fortunate circumstance that could possibly happen to you. That army is sufficiently well organised and strong enough not to have any thing to apprehend from the English army, even if the latter should amount to four or five divisions acting in concert.

"The enemy is at present under the impression that you are about to lay siege to Ciudad Rodrigo; and his right is made to extend towards General Hill, so as to enable the latter to join him by forced marches, when he will give battle to you with his whole army united, if you attempt to recover possession of Ciudad Rodrigo. It is, therefore, the duty of the Duke of Dalmatia to keep him in check with twenty thousand men, and prevent his effecting that movement; and in the event of General Hill's crossing the Tagus, to follow him, or advance into the Alemtejo. You have a duplicate of the letter which the Emperor desired I should write to the Duke of Dalmatia, on the 10th instant, in reference to the request which he made, that you would order some troops to the

south. You should have asked him, on the contrary, Monsieur le Maréchal, to send a large body of troops to the Guadiana, in order to detain General Hill in the south, and prevent his forming a junction with Lord Wellington. The English have too just a sense of French honour not to be fully aware that the success obtained by the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo may eventually turn to their disadvantage; and that instead of improving the condition of the English, the occupation of Ciudad Rodrigo imposes upon the latter the necessity of defending it. They leave the choice of the field of battle at our option; since you compel them to hasten to the relief of that city, and to fight in a position so far removed from the sea.... I can do no more than repeat the Emperor's orders: establish your head-quarters at Salamanca; use every activity in fortifying that town; collect in it a fresh besieging train, for the purpose of placing it in a state of defence, and every species of ammunition; let the English be annoyed by daily attacks; send forward two strong advanced-guards, the one to threaten Ciudad Rodrigo, the other Almeida; assume a menacing attitude in every other part of the Portuguese frontier; send out detachments to devastate some of the villages; exert every means, in short, for keeping the enemy upon the *qui-vive;* attend to the repair of the roads leading to Oporto and Almeida, and station your army in the neighbourhood of Toro and Benevente. There are even certain parts of the province of Avila which might supply you with resources. By assuming this position, which is as simple in itself as it is formidable to an enemy, you secure the object of giving rest to your troops, of forming magazines, and by means of easy but well-combined operations, which enable your advanced-posts to come every day to close fighting with the English, you have the advantage over them, and prevent their watching your movements. ... It is not for you, therefore, Monsieur le Duc, to give assist-

ance to the army of the south by spreading your forces over a wide extent of country. When you proceeded to take the command of your army, it had just suffered a severe check by its retreat from Portugal: that country had been devastated; the enemy's hospitals and magazines were at Lisbon; your troops were harassed, dispirited by forced marches, without artillery, without any field equipment; Badajoz had resisted a lengthened attack; a battle in the south had not had the effect of raising the siege. What course ought you then to have adopted? Ought you to have moved towards Almeida for the purpose of threatening Lisbon? Assuredly not; since your army had neither artillery nor field equipment, and was broken down by fatigue. Had you been in that position, the enemy would not have been deceived by the threat; he would have suffered you to approach as far as Coimbra, would have taken Badajoz, and then advanced to attack you. You acted, therefore, judiciously at that time. You advanced in all haste to the relief of Badajoz: the enemy had the start of you, and the art of war required that you should not shrink on the occasion. The siege was raised, and the enemy retreated into Portugal. All this was as it should be.... Your position at this moment, Monsieur le Duc, is plain and simple, and requires very little combination of mind to guide you. Place your troops in such a manner, that in four marches they may be collected and grouped round Salamanca, where you will have your own head-quarters: let your orders and arrangements give the enemy to understand that your heavy artillery is on its way to Salamanca, and that you are forming large magazines in that place.... If Wellington takes the road to Badajoz, do not molest him; but collect your army immediately, and march at once to Almeida: push your parties on towards Coimbra, and rest assured that Wellington will be soon again after you.

"Write to the Duke of Dalmatia, and urge the King to do the same, in order to induce that marshal to execute the impe-

rative instructions which he has received from me to move forward a corps of twenty thousand men, and thereby force General Hill to remain on the left bank of the Tagus. Give up then, Monsieur le Maréchal, all idea of moving to the south; and advance at once upon Portugal, if Lord Wellington should commit the error of proceeding upon the left bank of the Tagus .... Profit of the time taken up in collecting your troops, and attend to the regular and systematic organization of the north. Let the fortifications of Salamanca be carried on night and day; bring up heavy pieces of artillery; cause the besieging train to be repaired, and magazines of stores and provisions to be got in readiness. You will not fail to perceive, Monsieur le Maréchal, that by following these instructions, and carrying them into effect with becoming activity, you will keep the enemy in check .... By being the first to attack; by only attending to the army of the south which has no need of your assistance, since it consists of eighty thousand of the best troops in Europe; by bestowing attention to countries not under your command, and abandoning the Asturias and those provinces which really concern you, the injurious consequences of a battle would be felt all over Spain. A check received by the army of the south would compel it to retreat to Madrid or Valencia, and would not therefore be so serious in its results.

"I repeat that you are at liberty to retain the advantage over Lord Wellington by placing your head-quarters at Salamanca, occupying that position with a large force, and pushing strong reconnoitring parties to the passes. I could only state what I have already explained to you on the subject. If Badajoz were merely watched by two or three English divisions, the Duke of Dalmatia might easily raise the blockade. But Lord Wellington being thus weakened, you would be enabled to penetrate into the interior of Portugal; which movement would afford much more effectual relief to Badajoz than any other operation .... I am issuing directions that you

may be supplied with every thing requisite to enable you to complete your artillery, and place Salamanca in a state of defence .... The Emperor supposes you will quit Salamanca twenty-four hours after the receipt of this letter, unless any unexpected event should occur; that you will direct an advanced-guard to occupy the passes leading to Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida; that you will keep under your immediate orders a whole division at least, and will recall the cavalry and infantry which are with the division on the Tagus .... I particularly recommend that you should collect your cavalry, which is not over numerous, and which is nevertheless indispensable for your operations."

Marshal Marmont had very different notions of the manner in which the war was to be conducted. He transmitted them to the major-general about the same time that the latter was expediting to him the dispatch just laid before the reader. I publish the letter of this marshal, as containing a faithful account of the state of affairs in the Peninsula.

"Valladolid, 23rd February, 1812.

"To the Prince of Neufchatel.

"Monseigneur,

"I am not yet informed whether his Majesty will have deigned graciously to concede the request I had the honour of submitting to your Highness, the object of which was to obtain the Emperor's permission that I should act under him in the campaign about to commence: whatever may be his determination, I nevertheless deem it to be my duty to make known to him, at a moment when he is about to proceed to a distant country, what is the situation of affairs in this part of Spain.

"In conformity with the arrangements laid down by his Majesty, the army of Portugal has no longer the means of fulfilling the task assigned to it; and I should deem myself highly culpable were I to disguise the truth at this moment.

"The frontier is considerably weakened, owing, in the first place, to the departure of the troops, which were recalled in consequence of the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, having enabled the enemy to penetrate into the heart of Castille, by undertaking an offensive movement; and, in the second place, to the immense extent of country which the army is under the necessity of occupying, the effect of which must always be to throw delay and difficulties in the way of its again forming a junction; whereas it was lately united in a compact body, and ready to act in any direction.*

"The seven divisions composing it will amount to about forty-five thousand infantry when the regiments, which are announced to be on their way, shall have joined the main army. It requires a corps of at least five thousand men to occupy the fortified points, and the line of communication which it is necessary to keep up. A like force is indispensable for the purpose of watching the Esla, and of protecting it against the army of Galicia; which would evidently advance to Benevente and Astorga, in the event of any offensive movement on the part of the English. Supposing, therefore, that the whole army were united between the Douro and the Tormes, its strength could not exceed thirty-three or thirty-four thousand men; whilst the enemy has it now in his power to bring forward an army of upwards of sixty thousand men, one-half of them English, well-equipped and provided with every thing. And yet how great are the chances that the divisions of the Tagus are in the rear, that it has been found impossible to rally them in sufficient time; and that they will be separated from the main army during the most important moments of the campaign. The mass of our united forces would not then amount to more than twenty-five thousand men.

"His Majesty no doubt conjectures that, in this case, the

* The Emperor had divided the command, in consequence of what had occurred in Portugal, in 1809.

army of the north will send two divisions to the support of the army of Portugal; but what certainty has the Emperor that, in the present state of things, those troops will be enabled to make a rapid march, and arrive in time?

"The enemy assumes the offensive: his antagonist prepares his means of defence. The latter, who is to act hypothetically, quietly waits the course of events, and allows a valuable time to elapse without any good effect. The enemy advances to meet me. I collect my troops with great precision and method. I know within a day the moment when the greater part may be drawn up in line; the precise period at which the remainder will be in communication with my troops; and with this state of things before me, I determine either to act or to postpone my operations. But it is impossible for me to rely upon such calculations, except in the case of troops purely and exclusively under my own orders. With respect to those over which I have no controul, what delays, uncertainty, and lost time must I not be prepared for! I give intimation of the enemy's advance, and solicit assistance. I am answered by remarks upon my application. My letter is delayed in its course, owing to the communications being obstructed in this country. The answer, and my rejoinder to it, will encounter the like difficulties on the way; and the enemy will, in the interval, come up with me. Nevertheless, how will it be possible for me, even before-hand, to make reasonable calculations upon the movement of troops, whose strength and position are equally unknown to me? When I am ignorant of the situation of the country, or of the want of troops which is felt, I can only reason of events upon a consideration of the forces under my own orders: and as, however, I can only accept a battle by receiving the assistance of troops which are not at my disposal, but which are nevertheless enumerated as forming part of the force I am to oppose to the enemy, I find myself in a false position, and am wholly unable to

adopt any measure with due method, and a proper knowledge of facts.

"If it be considered how great is the foresight required in Spain for executing the most trifling operations; no doubt will be entertained of the necessity of issuing before-hand a variety of preliminary orders, without which all movements of a rapid kind are out of the question. Thus it happens that the troops of the north being in no way connected with me, although absolutely indispensable to enable me to fight a battle, the success of all my operations depends upon the greater or lesser degree of foresight and activity on the part of another commanding officer. It is therefore quite impossible that I should be able to answer for the result of any event.

"But it is not enough to consider the aspect of affairs with respect to our northern defence; we must not overlook what the protection of the south appears to require. If Lord Wellington should carry six divisions to the left bank of the Tagus, the Duke of Dalmatia will stand in need of a powerful co-operation. If in this case the army of the north should not furnish any troops for the purpose of relieving a part of the army of Portugal, in some of the positions which it will then have to evacuate for a time; but the retention of which by our forces is of importance to the security of the country, to the protection of Galicia, and to watching the movements of the two hostile divisions, which would be stationed on the Agueda, and would, no doubt, make some offensive demonstrations. If, I say, the army of the north should not come to its assistance, the army of Portugal would not be in adequate strength to send forward a suitable detachment, and Badajoz must infallibly surrender. Unquestionably, the army of the north must receive orders before it can attempt a movement founded upon hypothetical data, and will also require sufficient time to be set in motion. If we confine ourselves to mere pro-

posals or negotiations, we might waste in idle discussions a time which would be irrecoverably lost. I am fully justified in drawing this conclusion.

" The army of Portugal is at this moment the principal force in Spain: to her belongs the duty of protecting it from any English enterprise. It cannot manœuvre without resting points, without fortified places, fortresses, têtes-de-pont, &c. This can only be obtained by its being provided with all the *materiel* of an artillery; and I am unable to supply either field-pieces or ammunition; whereas the military depôts of the northern army have all these in abundance. I may ask for a portion of them: they will be promised to me; but eventually nothing will be sent to meet my wants.

" Having discussed the question in a military point of view, I must shortly advert to the administrative department. The country assigned to the army of Portugal is productive of resources estimated at one-third of those possessed by the five military governments. The army of Portugal is far more numerous than the northern army: the country which it occupies is as yet unsubdued; nothing can be procured except by coercive means; and the troops belonging to the army of the north appear to have intentionally carried off all its resources at the moment of evacuating it. The other governments, although overrun by guerillas, are still held in submission, and pay the contributions levied upon them without rendering it necessary to recur to compulsory measures. The condition of the two armies, therefore, is widely dissimilar; and as every thing ought to tend to the same object, as all are the Emperor's soldiers, and the exertions of all should concur to the success of our operations in general, is it not fair and just that the resources of all those governments should be regularly apportioned to the wants of each army? and yet I am at a loss to discover how we can secure this object, unless the authority should centre in a single chief.

" It will no doubt be found that I have clearly demonstrated

the necessity for an effectual defensive warfare in the north; that the general of the army of Portugal should always have under his orders the troops and territory belonging to the northern army, since these troops are called upon to fight in conjunction with the army of Portugal, and the resources of that territory are to be partly assigned to their support.

" I now turn to what concerns the south of Spain.

" It is a part of the duties of the army of Portugal to support the army of the south, to watch Badajoz, and cover Madrid. It is requisite for this purpose that a corps of sufficient strength should occupy the valley of the Tagus. This corps, however, will be unable to subsist, or to prepare resources for other troops following the same direction, in order to support it, unless it be in possession of a fruitful territory, which can be no other than the district belonging to the army of the centre. No other town in the valley of the Tagus can offer adequate resources, or means of subsistence. Nevertheless, the only country occupied by the army of Portugal on the banks of the Tagus is a desert, which is productive of no resources of any kind for men or horses; whilst the authorities of Madrid exhibit nothing but hatred and animosity towards it. The central army, which is inconsiderable, retains for its individual use a territory more fertile and extensive than what has been assigned to the whole army of Portugal. The resources of this valley cannot be rendered available for want of troops; and we encounter every species of resistance when we attempt to derive from it our means of subsistence. Nevertheless, if the borders of the Tagus should eventually be evacuated, in consequence of the prevailing scarcity, no one in Madrid would have the candour to appreciate the true motives of such a measure; and all would join in accusing the army of Portugal of leaving that capital uncovered.

It is in vain to conceal that there exists, on the part of the Spanish government, a degree of bitterness and animosity towards the French, of which no expressions can adequately

convey an idea. The disorder prevailing in Madrid is a sight of the most revolting description. If the supplies improvidently squandered away in that city had been husbanded for the army of Portugal, the troops on the borders of the Tagus would luxuriate in abundance, and be amply provided for a long time to come. Twenty-two thousand rations are daily consumed in Madrid, where there are not three thousand soldiers. This is owing to the waste occasioned by every one being allowed to give or take away, except those whose services entitle them to a preference. I go farther, and broadly assert, that it is even considered a crime to draw off those supplies which the army of the centre is unable to consume. It certainly does not appear inconsistent, that when persons have been carrying on, for the last two years, a regular system of deceiving the King, and are daily arming and clothing soldiers, who, at the end of eight-and-forty hours, are found to join the ranks of our enemies, when they thus seem to have established a regular mode of recruiting for the corps that incessantly annoy us, they should likewise endeavour to prepare means of subsistence for them at our expense.

"The only road of communication between the left of the army of Portugal and the remainder of that army, runs through the province of Segovia; and the movements of troops and of convoys cannot be unattended with difficulties; because, although the country through which it runs is very fertile in resources, the authorities of the army of the centre refuse to adopt any measures for the purpose of securing the means of subsistence of those troops.

"If it were possible to relieve the army of Portugal from the duty of advancing to the assistance of the south, and of covering Madrid, it might derive great benefit from concentrating itself in Old Castile. It would, in that case, have no more difficulties to contend with. If, on the contrary, it is expected to perform that double duty, it can only do so by occupying the valley of the Tagus, which furnishes it with

none of the resources requisite for its subsistence, for manœuvring, or preparing every thing to meet the wants of the troops which will necessarily be sent thither, unless it should take possession of the whole district reserved for the army of the centre, including the capital. That territory ought to subsist the troops which at present occupy it, in order that the army, when it shall advance against the enemy, may not be compelled to leave any one behind; but should draw from it all the assistance which it requires for keeping up its communications. That army claims, above all things, to be freed from the obstacles constantly raised by a government which is really opposed to the success of the French arms. Whatever may be the King's good intentions, he appears inadequate to contend against the self-interests and passions of those who surround him. It also appears that up to this moment he has been wholly unable to arrest the disorders constantly breaking out in Madrid, or the anarchy pervading the army of the centre. There may exist high political reasons for the King's residing in Madrid; but there are many more important ones, and affecting the success of the French arms, which would appear to recommend his selecting a different residence; for, in fact, either the King acts the part of a general, and is the commander of his armies, in which case he should be in the midst of his troops, ascertain their wants, provide and be responsible for every thing, or he is a perfect stranger to every operation; and then it is equally conducive to his personal quiet, and to the greater freedom of those operations, that he should remove from the very theatre of them, and from positions which are resting points for the movements of the army.

"The war in Spain is essentially attended with difficulties; but these are greatly increased by the division of commands, and the considerable diminution in the numbers of the respective armies, which that division affects in a still more fatal manner. If that division, which has already done so

much harm, at a time when the Emperor was in Paris, and giving his constant attention to his armies in the Peninsula, could be productive of a partial remedy to other evils, we should still tremble at the result which must infallibly attend such a system, since our means of action are accordingly diminished, at a moment when the Emperor is removing to a distance of three hundred leagues from his capital.

"I have laid before you, Monseigneur, all the reasons which appear to me to afford demonstrative evidence of the necessity of uniting under one chief the whole of the troops and of the country from Bayonne to Madrid and La Mancha inclusive. I have not been guided in this by any other motive than an ardent wish for the success of our arms, and an honest feeling. If the Emperor should not deem it proper to adopt the above system, I venture to request he will name my successor to the command which he had entrusted to me. I feel every confidence and conviction of being competent to act as efficiently as any other officer; but if every thing is to remain as at present, my means are inadequate to the task imposed upon me. Whatever difficulties may be consequent upon an appointment to the chief command of the forces, however awful the responsibility attending it, they appear to me to fall far short of that which my position, under present circumstances, must necessarily occasion.

"However flattering may be an important command, it does not in my mind possess any value unless accompanied with the means of rendering substantial services. When I find myself deprived of those means, every other character is preferable to me, and my ambition sinks at once to the level of doing the duties of a common soldier. I should feel no regret at sacrificing my life in the Emperor's cause; but I cannot remain in the cruel position of witnessing no other result of my unceasing efforts and anxious attentions, than the gloomy prospect of affixing my name to events as disastrous as they are unworthy of our military renown.

(Signed) "The Marshal DUKE OF RAGUSA."

So positive were the orders issued, that these remarks met with no attention, and the Duke of Ragusa was compelled to obey. He recalled the troops which he had kept along the Tagus, and moved towards the Agueda with four divisions, the only forces he could command without leaving unprotected the frontier of Galicia, which was threatened by a Spanish army; or relinquishing his line of communications with France. He commenced his movement towards the end of March, raised the blockade of Badajoz, crossed the Agueda, entered Portugal, drove back the English who were opposed to him, defeated the Portuguese militiamen, and invaded the province of the Mondego. But whilst he was thus penetrating into an intricate country, the English had renewed the siege of Badajoz with increased activity. The town fell into their power, and the marshal was compelled to retreat, and reached Salamanca with no other result of his operations than his having subjected his troops to severe fatigue.

Those operations were terminated previously to the Emperor's taking his departure for Russia. He felt greatly displeased at the conduct of Marshal Marmont, and complained that no talent was displayed in his service; observing, that by the aid of the most trifling combination, nothing was easier than to collect three times as many troops as the English could number on their side, and settle the question at once by a battle, the result of which could not for a moment have been of doubtful issue: but that, for want of a proper understanding, each party sacrificed the interest confided to him to the gratification of self-love; and the English general would be allowed to manœuvre with united forces upon the several corps of our army, each one in its turn, and thus defeat it in detail. If the Emperor could have found it possible to spare himself for two months from other objects, he would have gone in person to Spain; but such a course would have been productive of the most serious difficulties.

After the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, the general aspect of affairs in Spain hung upon the issue of a battle

which it became the evident policy of the English army to bring about. It was therefore indispensably necessary that every preparation should be made for fighting an action, and that those points which there existed no longer any motive for obstinately maintaining, should be immediately abandoned; the more so, as the English army was already manœuvring upon Castile, whilst our best troops were stationed before Cadiz, Malaga, and Granada, in the kingdom of Valencia, and many other parts of Spain, where they could take no part in the events which must infallibly compel a retreat from all the positions they occupied.

Independently of the armies engaged in active operations, there was an army of reserve in the province of Biscay, consisting of two strong divisions, one of which was stationed at Burgos. King Joseph had also a strong reserve in Madrid. Unfortunately, however, for our cause, these excellent troops were in scattered positions, under different leaders, free from each other's controul, and without any centre of authority that could give to their movements the stamp of uniformity. The consequence was, that the districts assigned to each corps became so many petty viceroyalties governed in as many different ways, and paying as little deference to the authority of the King of Spain as they would to the Emperor of Morocco.

The operations carrying on in Biscay and Navarre were directed from Paris by the minister of war, who could only receive news from those provinces by causing the courier who was the bearer of the correspondence to be escorted by one or two battalions; and it was impossible for that correspondence to reach Paris before the occurrence of fresh events on the spot from whence it proceeded. This was not the only inconvenience felt; it was also necessary to keep along the line of communication a great number of troops, which did not, however, secure the correspondence from being interrupted. The English army, which was weaker

than our own, but obeyed the orders of a single chief, and that chief a skilful one, was posted at Fuentes de Onor, in the rear of Ciudad Rodrigo. It was evident that he would attack Marmont's army, which stood as great a chance of being defeated as the army of Andalusia; and the success of the English would have very different results from those which would attend any reverses of fortune we might experience at the other extremity of Spain.

Every measure, therefore, should have been combined, and in a state of readiness to enable the army under Marmont to defeat the English; whilst, on the contrary, as much apathy was shown to it as if it had not been supposed to exist. Each one sheltered himself under his own responsibility, attended to the subsistence of the troops, and contracted a habit of leaving the rest to time.

The English army employed it to a better purpose. The course of its operations will soon follow this narrative.

CHAPTER XX.

Strength and composition of the army—Passage of the Niemen—The Russians retreat at all points—Bagration escapes from us—Should the Emperor have stopped on the Dwina?—Considerations arising on this subject.

WHILST matters were in the condition described in the preceding chapter, the Emperor was crossing the immense extent of country which divides the Vistula from the Niemen.

It will be proper in the outset to enumerate his prodigious army, of which I can only give a summary account, not having taken any part in the expedition.

The army was estimated, altogether, at four hundred thousand men; French, Austrians, Prussians, Poles, Saxons,

Westphalians, Wirtemburgers, Dutch, confederated princes of the Rhine, Swiss, Italians, and Neapolitans, all contributed to swell its ranks.

The French artillery alone reckoned twenty thousand draft horses, and the cavalry upwards of a hundred thousand. If to this number be added the horses belonging to officers and to the baggage, some estimate may be formed of the daily consumption of provisions.

The remainder of the army was composed of infantry.

The army crossed the Vistula in the following order, commencing with the left wing :—

The Prussians were under the command of Marshal Macdonald.

The Bavarians, and three French divisions, under Marshal Oudinot and General St. Cyr.

The Italians, under the Viceroy of Italy.

French troops, under Marshal Ney.

Other French troops, under Marshal Davout.

The Wirtemburgers and Westphalians, under General Junot.

The Poles, under Poniatowski.

The Saxons, under General Reynier.

The Austrians, under Prince Schwartzenberg.

The cavalry, under the King of Naples.

The infantry of the guard, under Marshal Lefevre.

The cavalry of the guard, under Marshal Bessières.

Marshal Victor was organising a corps of reserve in the rear.

Marshal Augereau watched over the tranquillity of Germany.

Whilst this armament was approaching the Russian empire, a reserve was kept up in France of a hundred thousand national-guards collected on the most vulnerable points ; such as Paris, Cherbourg, Brest, Rochefort, Toulon, Turin, Strasburg, and Antwerp. They were clothed and equipped like

regular troops; and were commanded by veteran officers, who had either retired from the service, or been placed upon half-pay.

In no period of history do we find any allusion to such considerable armaments as those which marked that fatal year, 1812.

From the 10th to the 15th of June, the army crossed the Niemen upon three bridges, which were thrown over it, near each other, and at the distance of half a league from Kowno. It took the road to Wilna, which had been occupied a very few days before by the Russian army and the Emperor Alexander in person.

The light troops of the enemy were not overtaken until we approached Wilna, which they evacuated, retreating in various directions towards the Dwina. Their most numerous corps was in front of our right; that is to say, in the vicinity of Grodno. They proceeded in the direction of Mohilow, by the road of Bobruisk.

The greater part of the hostile army retreated upon Drissa, where they had a vast intrenched camp. Our army followed in pursuit of it. The Emperor made Marshal Davout advance in such a manner as to compel the corps before him to move in an oblique direction to the right, so as to prevent its forming a junction with the troops which were rallying behind the Dwina. That corps, which was under Prince Bagration's orders, was the only one exposed to danger by this first operation. If Marshal Davout had been able to comply with the Emperor's instructions, and so effectually to isolate, if not to destroy the corps, as to prevent its being of any use to the main army, it is probable that such an inroad upon the centre of the Russian army would have decided the fate of the campaign. When deprived of the assistance of the body of troops which the marshal was driving before him, it could not have brought together a larger force than eighty thousand men.

Wilna was entered on the 21st June, without any previous engagement. The Emperor remained a few days in that city, in order to send forward the different corps of his army in the directions in which he intended them to proceed.

Marshal Macdonald, who had crossed the Niemen at Tilsit, advanced in the direction of Riga. The cavalry moved upon Drissa, where it was supposed that the Russians would attempt to defend their intrenched camp. They discovered that it had been evacuated, and learned that there was only a small corps, under General Wittgenstein, on the other side of the Dwina, in front of the intrenched camp. The Emperor left Marshal Oudinot to oppose him, and with the remainder of the army took the road to Smolensko. Marshal Davout kept marching in a parallel line with the head of Prince Bagration's column; and so closely pressed him to lean upon his right, that this corps was compelled to seek a passage across the Dnieper, in order to overtake that portion of the Russian army which had marched towards the Dwina. This was no doubt taking a great circuit; but the prince succeeded in his object, and restored to the hostile army a large body of troops, which would have been rendered completely useless if the Emperor's orders had been punctually executed. The success of this movement proved for the Russians fully equivalent to the gain of a battle. The losses they had suffered consisted in nothing more than a few square leagues: they became thenceforward united, and less apprehensive of an engagement. Nevertheless they refused to fight a battle, and continued their retreat, laying every thing waste in their rear. They were drawing nearer to their resources, whilst the French army, which was necessarily anxious to bring them to an engagement, was compelled to follow them through vast barren wastes, where it could not fail to be eventually annihilated.

For any country in Europe, except Russia, so extensive a system of devastation could not fail to be productive of absolute ruin. In a country, in fact, where every building is

made of wood, the sacrifice is not so great for a nation, which can repair the evil in less than a twelvemonth.

It has been generally asserted, that it was an act of barbarity to burn every thing in this manner; and the French have been accused as the authors of the measure. But the Russians were too deeply interested in the rigid enforcement of those conflagrations to leave the task to be performed by those who were as deeply interested in preventing them. No doubt, however, is any longer entertained as to the injustice of those imputations.

The Russians, therefore, were retreating by the road from Smolensko to Moscow, leaving to the French army the alternative either of remaining upon the Dwina, or of following them under the most disadvantageous circumstances.

The Emperor had at first intended to fix his quarters along the Dwina; but the Russian army having continued its retreat, and escaped his manœuvres, he was compelled to follow, in order to force it to an engagement; the object of which was to place it under the impossibility of undertaking any thing during the whole winter. Owing to this consideration having been overlooked, the Emperor's views have been much criticised, though the correctness of them admits of an easy proof.

We must first bear in mind that the Emperor had an immense army; the junction of which could only be effected by degrees, and with great regularity in the combination of its movements. It must also be observed, that a great part of that army had not an equal interest with ourselves in our own successes: some of the corps composing it might, at a later period, be found wanting in their attachment to our cause.

It is impossible to form an idea of the difficulties of all kinds which the Emperor had to contend with, in his endeavours to keep together so many discordant elements; which would no sooner have escaped his controul, than they would have been wielded against him. He stood in need of their

assistance for carrying his projects into effect; and could not safely submit to too severe a trial the patience of soldiers who marched reluctantly under his standards. The object of the first part of his plan of operations had failed: the Russian army was united in one body as well as our own. What might not have happened had we gone into winter-quarters, in order to aid a general rising in Poland? There is every probability that the Russian government, finding the best portion of its dominions torn from it, and having nothing more to lose, would have made every sacrifice to keep its forces together, and bring them in a body against our army, which had not the resource of any natural position to protect it after it should have become disunited. The enemy would have been in greater strength than ourselves, on whichever point he might have moved; and would accordingly have prevented the junction of our several corps, which it would be found necessary to scatter over the country, to enable them to procure means of subsistence. Besides this consideration, we had only reached the month of July: it would be vain to expect, under such circumstances, that Poland would respond to the impulse it was attempted to give that country. For, however undoubted the courage of the people, they never would have pronounced themselves without being fully satisfied that no reverse of fortune was to be apprehended. What, in fact, in the event of a failure, would have become of that prodigious quantity of arms and equipments of every kind, which had been brought from France, for the purpose of arming and equipping the Polish nation?

Do we forget what was so near happening to us after the battle of Eylau? Much worse awaited us on the present occasion. Besides, if the Emperor had placed his immense army in winter-quarters, it would have completely exhausted Poland; every resource of the country would thus have been drained, previously to the commencement of operations, which might not have been terminated in one campaign. This was accordingly the motive which actuated the Polish government,

when it recommended that the army should march forward. No skilful general, moreover, would ever think of placing his army in winter-quarters, in the presence of an enemy as strong as himself, without having first decided by some important warlike event, the question as to which party should set the example of ulterior movements; for if he is to keep on the defensive, nothing but a suspension of arms can afford him any security in his winter-quarters. Now, a suspension of arms would have been an act of insanity in the then state of things. The Russians could only be losers by granting it: they would have lost the assistance of the only allies that could be of any effectual service to them—winter and its horrors.

The Emperor could entertain no doubt of the favourable issue of a battle he was so anxious to bring about. He had all the springs of his army at command. He had certainly not been able to gain upon the Russians in their retreat; but they formed a larger and more unwieldy mass, whose movements would necessarily be much slower than our own. There was nothing unreasonable in the expectation, that we might so closely press upon their rear as to be able to fight them in detached portions, and force them into partial engagements, necessarily productive of a general one; after which, it was the Emperor's intention to unfold the second part of his plan of operations.

There is no doubt that if he could have calculated beforehand upon all the faults which were committed in the execution of his orders, and which prevented his coming up with the Russian army until the 7th of September, he never would have dreamed of sending on so distant an expedition, and at so late a period of the season, an army which, having been placed in the alternative of conquering, or dying of absolute want, and been successful in the struggle, eventually found itself placed in the farther alternative of again conquering, or of sinking under the severity of the cold.

CHAPTER XXI.

Smolensko is on the point of being taken by surprise—Battle of Valontina—Junot's inactivity—Operations of the army of Portugal—Battle of Salamanca—The Pope is brought into France—Accident which happens to him at Mount Cenis—Distress of the officer of his escort—The holy father continues his journey.

BAGRATION had escaped the pursuit of our columns: the junction might be considered as effected; no movement on our part could any longer prevent it. The Emperor was anxious to allow some rest to his troops, which were exhausted by fatigue and privations. He spread them amongst the villages in advance of Witepsk, and cantoned them in every place which afforded the smallest resources. The Russians became emboldened by this dispersion: they flattered themselves to be able to take us by surprise, and accordingly retraced their steps. The Emperor allowed them to deploy their columns; and whilst they advanced along one of the banks of the Dnieper, he crossed over to the opposite bank, and arrived by a rapid march in sight of Smolensko, which he was on the point of taking by surprise. The Russians returned in all haste, and succeeded in overtaking us. The battle became general: they were defeated, were accordingly compelled to abandon the town to us, and retreated partly by the road to Moscow, and partly by that of St. Petersburg. The Emperor ordered troops in pursuit of them; whilst General Junot, who was directed to move along the left bank, was instructed to cross the river, and cut off their retreat. Had these measures been carried into effect, the enemy would infallibly have been destroyed, and the campaign at

once decided. Junot, however, remained stationary at his post: the road was left free, and the Russians retreated after a sanguinary action, in which General Gudin was killed.

The Emperor was highly displeased at General Junot's state of inaction; but the mischief was done, and could not be remedied.

The Russian army thus escaped destruction for the second time; and kept fighting in its retreat, whenever a favourable opportunity offered for turning round upon us.

We had again failed in our object, had gone too far to recede, and were compelled to follow the track of the Russian army with a vast assemblage of troops which exhausted all the resources of the country; and what is still more to be wondered at, without any precaution being taken by the administrative department to send forward the immense quantity of provisions which the Emperor had caused to be collected in various parts of Poland. This inexcusable error was one of the causes of the disorganization, which eventually spread amongst the troops when they were under the necessity of providing for their daily wants.

In order to avert such evils, the Emperor must have been expected to think for every one, and to act the part assigned to each. He had not even the benefit of the smallest suggestion from others: all confined themselves to listen and obey his wishes, without ever submitting any of those observations which a mind so constantly on the stretch might well be supposed to have overlooked.

Matters had taken a still more deplorable turn in Spain. I now resume the narrative of occurrences in that country.

After the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz, the English had formed into platoons in the north; had collected there large magazines of provisions, and made every preparation for carrying on a vigorous offensive warfare. With the view of keeping the army of Portugal in its isolated position,

when his operations should have commenced, it was of importance for Lord Wellington to lay the ground-work of eventual success by destroying the means of communication existing between the hostile forces in the south and north of the country, as he naturally supposed the French armies to act with that concert which was to be expected between friendly troops; and was far from suspecting, that the very spirit of rivalry subsisting between them was sufficient to effect the purpose he had in view. Accordingly, he caused a coup-de-main to be made upon Almaraz, which was crowned with success.

The fortifications of Almaraz were intended to secure the passage of the Tagus, by protecting the bridge from being carried. Badajoz had been saved in the preceding year, in consequence of the movement made by the army of Portugal, and its junction with the army of the south: the former might, in its turn, expect to receive effectual assistance from the latter.

On the 18th of March, General Hill's division suddenly presented itself before the bridge of Almaraz, avoiding that of Miravets; and advanced without cannon, and in the night time, close up to the field-works of the right bank, which protected the bridge over the Tagus. The forts had been carefully constructed, and were defended by a redoubt, and the works were strengthened with fraises and palisadoes. The English troops being provided with ladders, they immediately attempted a scalade, and succeeded in their object. A foreign battalion, which formed the chief part of the garrison, basely gave way: Aubert, its commander, though an officer of great personal courage, lost his presence of mind, and knew not which way to turn. The enemy, after demolishing the forts on the right bank, and destroying the bridge, fell back upon Estramadura; and General Foy, who had arrived from Oropesa with his division, was unable to come up in time. Had the forts resisted the attack for a single day, the ex-

pedition of the English troops would have proved disastrous to them.

Lord Wellington, feeling himself quite at ease respecting the movements of the army in the south of Spain, crossed the Agueda on the 13th of June, and marched upon Salamanca. The French army was scattered over the country, in order to secure its means of subsistence; but every thing had been prepared for bringing all the troops together whenever circumstances might require it. The forts of Salamanca, three in number, named St. Vincent, St. Caetano, and the Royal College, formed an imposing defence which could not fail to arrest the progress of the enemy. They were left to their own means of protection; and the army of Portugal effected the junction of all its corps at the distance of a few leagues in the rear. The enemy in the mean while took up a position on the heights of San-Cristoval, blockaded the forts, and finally laid regular siege to them.

The Emperor's instructions had enjoined, that in case of an offensive movement on the part of the English army against that of Portugal, two divisions of the northern army should join it with the greater part of its artillery and cavalry, whilst the army of the centre should furnish six thousand men; and that if General Hill crossed over to the right bank of the Tagus, the fifth corps should follow it, and form a junction with the army of Portugal. The Duke of Ragusa lost no time in calling for the promised assistance: he sent orders to General Bonnet, who commanded the eighth division in the kingdom of Leon, to make all haste to join him; and after collecting a force of about twenty-five thousand men, he marched forward, and came to take up a position within cannon-shot of the English army. The siege was suspended in consequence of this offensive movement; but our attack having been put off until the forces had formed a junction, the siege was renewed. The enemy was repulsed in some sharp assaults, in which they suffered a loss three times

as great as the whole amount of the garrison; but a fire accidentally took place, which destroyed the means of defence, and the forts surrendered. The army having no longer any object to accomplish, until its means of giving battle had been collected, retired towards the Douro; which manœuvre brought it nearer to its reinforcements. The retreat was effected in presence of the enemy, without the slightest molestation, and the English army followed in pursuit.

As soon as the Duke of Ragusa had reached that position, he again desired that all the contingent forces which had been promised should immediately join him. General Caffarelli announced, on the 14th June, that he was about to march with eight thousand infantry, eighteen hundred horse, and twenty-two pieces of cannon. Subsequent letters stated, that his reinforcement was delayed by the movements of guerilla parties. Later ones, again, that the appearance of English vessels on the coast would detain him for an indefinite period; and at last, that, with the exception of the first regiment of hussars, no reinforcement whatever could be sent. The Duke of Ragusa had, nevertheless, promised General Caffarelli, that he would place at his disposal as many troops as he thought proper, for the purpose of restoring order in the district assigned to him, as soon as the English should have been beaten, or driven back; but the general seemed to set little value on those promises.

The King of Spain caused a letter to be written by Marshal Jourdan to the Duke of Ragusa,* stating, that no assistance

* "Monsieur le Maréchal,—The King has directed me to state, that he has not heard from you since the letter you did me the honour to write to me on the 14th instant. Rumours of every kind have been in circulation since that time; but the only thing that has come out of the contradictory reports is, that the English army has taken up a position on the Tormes, and that you have collected your own army on the Douro. You are fully sensible, Monsieur le Maréchal, of his Majesty's extreme impatience to hear from you. It is reported here that the enemy's army amounts to about fifty thousand men, including eighteen thousand English soldiers. The King imagines that if this intelligence be correct, you are in a condi-

would be sent to him from the army of the centre. He urged him to act on the offensive against the English army without farther delay. This letter was written on the 30th of June, and reached its destination in the early part of July.

What could the Duke of Ragusa do under these circumstances? He was disappointed of all the assistance he expected; and future events might contribute to augment the difficulties of his position. In fact, if General Hill had crossed the Tagus, the English army would have been reinforced by twelve or fifteen thousand men; and the 5th corps (if it had been sent, which was greatly to be doubted,) would have had to march through the province of La Mancha, in order to effect a passage over the Tagus, and must have arrived long after General Hill, who would have crossed over at Alcantara, where the bridge had been restored. There

tion to defeat that army; and he is very anxious to be made acquainted with the motives which have prevented you from acting on the offensive. He accordingly desires me to request you will write to him by express on the subject.

"His Majesty farther directs me to communicate to you the news he has received from Andalusia. The last letters of the Duke of Dalmatia are dated the 16th, and those of Count d'Erlon the 18th instant. General Hill, who had remained on the Guadiana with a corps of fifteen thousand men, and three or four thousand Spaniards, had advanced at that time to Zafra, and even as far as Llerena.

"Some troops of the army of the south are marching to join General Drouet, who must be carrying on operations against General Hill ever since the 20th instant. The King has reiterated to the Duke of Dalmatia the order to send General Drouet in the direction of the valley of the Tagus, if Lord Wellington should have instructed General Hill to join him. But as it would be possible, even in this case, that his orders may not be carried into effect with the requisite promptness, his Majesty is desirous you should take advantage of Lord Wellington's not being yet joined by all his forces, and offer him battle.

"The King has also demanded some troops of General Suchet; but he does not rely upon their arrival. All that his Majesty could do, therefore, was to send a reinforcement of troops to the province of Segovia, and to direct General Estive, the governor of that province, to afford assistance in case of need to the garrison of Avila, and to send forward the provisions of which it stands in need.

"The marshal of the empire, chief of the staff of his Catholic Majesty,

(Signed) "JOURDAN."

"Madrid, 30th of June, 1812."

would have been a disproportion of twelve or fifteen thousand men between the numerical strength of the English and French forces. On the other hand, the army of Galicia was blockading Astorga, which was supplied with provisions for no longer than the 1st of August. It was out of the question to attempt to relieve it, or to detach any troops for that purpose, until the English army had been defeated, or driven back into Portugal. The Duke of Ragusa resolved, therefore, to adopt offensive operations; and only delayed them until the arrival of the 8th division, which was advancing from the frontiers of Asturias.

When this event had taken place, he effected some feigned movements towards the Douro, in order to deceive the enemy. The Duke of Ragusa had fixed upon the bridge of Tordesillas, as the point where he should attempt a passage. Independently of the advantages which that position presented to him, it was the shortest line of communication from Valladolid to Salamanca. The army, therefore, in assuming the offensive, ran no risk of losing that communication. The passage was effected to his wish: the enemy, deceived by that operation, did not oppose any obstacle to it.

The army, whilst on its march, fell in with two English divisions, on the 18th of July. They hastily retreated, after experiencing some loss from the pursuit of our troops, which extended to the borders of the Guarina, where the whole English army was assembled. The passage of this small river, the banks of which are very swampy, was attended with considerable difficulty. The French army had to make a flank movement before an enemy superior in numbers, and ready drawn up to receive it. The movements were so well planned, and executed with so much precision, that the operation was attended with complete success. These manœuvres enabled it to reach the heights of San-Cristoval, near Salamanca, of which the English had just taken possession. The French army resumed the position it had

formerly occupied on the heights of Aldea Rubio, commanding the Tormes.

On the 21st of July the whole army crossed the Tormes, and took up a position at Calvaraza de Arriba. The English army made a parallel movement, and stationed itself in front of the French army.

Early on the 22nd, the respective positions were taken up with greater precision; and the centre of each army occupied one of the heights of the Arapiles, which are only separated from each other by a small ravine, and a distance of one hundred and fifty toises.

Lord Wellington made every preparation for a battle, and at the hour of eleven set his columns of attack in motion. On farther consideration, however, he stopped short; and having discovered that the French army occupied a strong position, he renounced the idea of attacking it. From that moment he determined to retreat, and made every arrangement in consequence. This retrograde movement became a matter of necessity, as soon as he declined giving battle; because the French army would have fallen the next day upon his line of communication, in furtherance of its own plan of operations. The Duke of Ragusa only delayed attacking the English until the greater part of their forces should have removed to a distance. All of a sudden, however, General Maucune, a gallant soldier, who never beheld the enemy without feeling his blood boiling within him, was carried away by his ardour, descended from his position, and pursued the English army, without receiving either orders or assistance to warrant his rash and uncalled-for movement, which compromised the safety of all, threw a doubt over our expected success, and sacrificed the fruits of the prudent and judicious dispositions prepared many months before-hand. The Duke of Ragusa, after sending directions for the troops to resume their former position, thought it safer to visit it in person; but at the very moment of starting on his way thither, he re-

ceived a severe wound from a cannon-ball, which compelled him to quit the field. This fatal event left the command in doubtful hands, spread disorder amongst the troops, and caused the misfortunes of the day. Nevertheless, the enemy, according to official and authentic reports, experienced a greater loss than the French army. It was during the retreat that they took prisoners a great number of soldiers, who had been driven by the want of provisions to scatter themselves over the country.

Whilst the events were taking place, of which I have just given an account, the Pope was on his way to France. The Emperor, at the moment of his departure for Dresden, had discovered, by the reports of the naval department, that an English cruiser had been stationed before Genoa; and he wrote to me, accordingly, not to delay the Pope's journey any longer. He directed me to bring his Holiness to Fontainebleau, and to neglect nothing that was calculated to afford accommodation during the journey, but to prevent the news being made public. He sent me a letter for Prince Borghese, the governor of Piedmont, requesting him to bring to Turin an Italian bishop, a great favourite of the Pope, whom the latter would no doubt be gratified at meeting on his way. The Emperor repeated the injunction he had already given me not to do any thing that might be the means of his being arraigned with intentions which he never entertained. Nothing was farther from his mind than to offer any violence to the head of the church: he merely wished to remove him from the effects of an influence which endangered the repose of our departments.

The Emperor's orders were punctually obeyed. I sent instructions to Savona in compliance with those orders, and adopted every other measure requisite to insure the success of the operation intrusted to my care. The Pope made no difficulty to repair to Fontainebleau. He quietly stepped into his carriage, only stopped at Turin to see

the bishop I have mentioned, and proceeded on his way to France.

On crossing Mount Cenis, he fell so seriously ill as to alarm every person of his suite. The officer of gendarmerie, who was at the head of the escort, reported the circumstance to me by a courier. This worthy man apprehended that the Pope's life was in danger, and was distressed beyond measure at being charged with such a mission.

The Pope's illness arose from a stoppage in the bladder, which had become inflamed, in consequence of the rapidity of his journey. He remained two or three days at the convent of Mount Cenis; and received so much attention in that interval of time, that he was enabled to continue his journey; and arrived with the rapidity of lightning at the palace of Fontainebleau, where the same apartment had been prepared for his reception, which he had formerly occupied when he came to crown the Emperor.

Private servants of every kind, belonging to the Emperor's household, had been sent there before-hand, as well as carriages and horses from his stables. The Emperor sent orders from the army for the ministers and the officers of his household to pay their respects to the holy father; and directed a person in his confidence to inform him in what manner his orders had been obeyed. I now take my leave of the Pope, but shall presently return to him.

The English did not follow up at first, with any degree of ardour, the success they had obtained at Salamanca: instead of pursuing the remains of our army, which would have been unable to rally, they advanced to Madrid, where the general-in-chief was anxious to cull the laurels of his victory.

The King had been under the necessity of evacuating his capital: he had retreated in the direction of Marshal Suchet's corps, in the kingdom of Valencia; from whence he gave repeated and positive orders to Marshal Soult to evacuate Andalusia, and to march his army against the English.

At the time of his issuing those orders, and of Marshal Soult's receiving them, the English general was in Madrid; so that it was deemed hazardous to bring back the army of Andalusia across the Sierra Morena. It was supposed the English were about to establish themselves in La Mancha; The marshal made his movement through the kingdom of Murcia, came up with the troops of Marshal Suchet, and marched with them upon Madrid, which the King again entered with these forces.

Whilst this operation was carrying into effect, the English army had advanced towards Burgos, with the intention of carrying the castle. Fortunately for us, it was commanded by a gallant officer, who courageously resisted the repeated attacks of the English, and compelled them to retreat.

CHAPTER XXII.

Injurious effect created upon public opinion by the loss of the battle of Salamanca—State of the public mind—Anxiety felt respecting the condition of our affairs in the north—Peace of Bucharest—The army of the Danube advances upon our rear—Bernadotte—Reflections upon the conduct of that prince.

THE loss of the battle of Arapiles dispelled, in a great measure, the favourable impression which the bulletins of the grand army were calculated to produce. Comments were now made upon them, and the most sanguine people could not fail to remark that the isolated engagements of which those bulletins gave an account had not the character of decisive events. They were partial feats of arms, glorious, no doubt, for the troops and the generals who had shared in them, but by no means of a nature to decide the question

between the contending forces. A calculation was made of how many days had still to run of the fine season for the operations of the army, and of the distance it had still to perform; but there was nothing to satisfy the public anxiety on a review of the dangers it still had to encounter.

An extreme avidity for news was every where displayed, coupled with a kind of restless uneasiness, which naturally increased the desire for fresh intelligence.

A decisive battle between the Russian army and our own was anxiously hoped for. It was clearly perceived that the Emperor was manœuvring to force the enemy to an action; but the reports of those partial combats were only considered as a compensation offered to the public feeling of a nation hitherto spoiled by an uninterrupted series of victories.

The conclusion of an armistice was the only thing expected with any certainty; and as a necessary consequence, the placing the troops into winter quarters.

A general halt had been ordered for the purpose of allowing the troops some breathing time. It was remarked that they had been kept in constant march; that their shoes must therefore be in a bad condition; and yet, that no fresh supply had followed the army. The bulletins reported that a large quantity of flower had arrived, that provisions were collecting in various directions. The conclusion drawn from all this was, that the army was unprovided with every thing, and that those particulars were given for no other purpose than to calm the public agitation. It was known that the army suffered many privations. A correct estimate of its wants might be drawn from a calculation of its numerical amount.

Other reflections were made of a no less painful nature. It was observed that hitherto the Russian army had baffled all the attempts made to force it to an engagement; that it had effected its escape at Smolensko; and that no reasonable calculation could any longer be made upon the results to be anticipated from the continued advance of the French army,

since there was no possibility of stopping the Russians in their retreat.

The public mind was wholly engrossed by these reflections, and anxiously longed for an armistice which, when taken advantage of by able hands, must always terminate in a peace.

The idea was fondly entertained that the Emperor would continue to drive the Russians before him for some time longer, and return to take up winter quarters behind the Dwina and along the banks of the Dnieper. It was inferred that he would thus have the whole month of September to intrench a position in advance of Smolensko, between those two rivers, and to bring up the provisions he had collected in the rear of the army.

The Emperor would have come back to Wilna, where he would have stirred up the whole of Poland, and raised an army from that country, in readiness for the ensuing campaign.

So much reliance was placed in the occurrence of the events thus contemplated, that the rumour was already gaining ground of the departure of the Empress for Wilna, where it was supposed that the Emperor would require her presence.

It was also alleged that the Emperor had ordered the engineer officers of the army to reconnoitre a military position between the Dwina and the Dnieper, which would admit of being strongly fortified and of receiving the whole army.

The public uneasiness increased when it was discovered that this specious plan of campaign was not carried into effect, and that the Emperor, instead of halting in the midst of the fine season, continued to move on. Every mind was on the stretch to forebode misfortunes, of which experience unhappily confirmed the reality. The expedition was, no doubt, a very daring and hazardous one, and I cannot pretend to defend a policy, the propriety of which has been condemned by the event; but let us weigh the considerations which justified the confidence felt in marching forward, and which

required that an army composed of such discordant elements should not be allowed to enjoy a repose of at least six or seven months. Lastly, if we add to this picture some reflections on the respective characters of the individuals who were about the Emperor's person, such as the King of Naples, and the Prince of Neufchatel, I think they will afford more than on any other occasion a correct solution of the motives which led to the uninterrupted continuation of the campaign.

Previously to entering Russia the Emperor had sent General Andreossi as his ambassador to Constantinople. It will readily be imagined that he was instructed to urge the Turks to attempt the reconquest of the provinces wrested from them. He was unfortunately sent six months too late. He was as yet uninitiated in the very first notions of the intrigues to which that court was a prey, when be was desired to prevail upon it to adopt a course it could only be expected to listen to at the suggestion of a powerful influence, which is only to be obtained by a long previous intercourse. Misfortune would have it that the Emperor, having always hoped that he would not be so soon forced into a war, had felt apprehensive at sending too soon to Constantinople an ambassador whose mission would have inspired the Russians with alarm.

The consequence was, that when the Turks beheld this ambassador, they foresaw what it was intended to ask of them. They very justly remarked, that much less anxiety had been shown to send that ambassador when the Russians were imposing conditions upon them no less severe than those they now had no longer the means of resisting. They recollected their having been deserted at Tilsit, after they had undertaken the campaign for no other purpose than to suit our views. They now treated us in the same manner. They profited of the embarrassments we had brought upon the Russians to obtain conditions which, however severe, might have

been much more so had we not opportunely come forward to paralyse in that quarter, and engross all the strength of the Russians.

Instead, therefore, of yielding to our entreaties, the Turks listened to the proposals of the Russians, who immediately marched back their army through Poland, which, by ascending the Dnieper, was now moving upon our rear.

It is proper to remark, in this place, that whilst the Emperor was taking his measures to carry on the war with becoming vigour, he had carefully avoided every appearance of being the aggressor: he wished thereby to reserve to himself the means of negotiating with the Emperor Alexander, who he clearly perceived had wholly resigned himself to that influence from which he had succeeded in withdrawing him at the period of the treaty of Tilsit.

At the very commencement of the present campaign the Emperor had opened an intercourse with Sweden, for the express purpose of inducing her to seize upon this opportunity of recovering the possession of Finland. Nothing assuredly could be farther from his thoughts than that a marshal of France, who had been raised to the throne on the shields of French soldiers, and was called to direct the destinies of a people excited to a natural animosity against the Russians by their political interests, and the recollections of their former glory, and of the recent act of injustice of which they had been the victims;—nothing, I say, could be more unexpected than that Bernadotte should sacrifice to that unhappy passion of the human breast, a petty hatred, the true interests of the Swedes, in the furtherance of which he ought to have placed his pride, solely to gratify a mere personal desire of revenge upon the worn-out frames of those very soldiers, whom he had but three years before called his own children, and whose blood had laid the foundation of his fortune.

Nevertheless, he was the person who drove Sweden to the course she adopted. His predecessor could not have acted a

worse part than he did. When the latter descended from the throne, he had not yet lost Finland; and Bernadotte, as the price of his attachment to Russia, saw the province of Pomerania wrested from his possession. True it is, that he received a compensation for the loss. Be this as it may, not only did Bernadotte turn a deaf ear to the proposal that he should attack Finland, but he yielded to the suggestions of those who were about his person, and made him accede to proposals of a very different character, which history will record to his disgrace.

After the retreat of the Russian army behind the Dwina, the Emperor of Russia had returned to St. Petersburg. By terminating the war with the Turks, and bringing Bernadotte under his yoke, he had unquestionably made great progress towards eventual success.

The Emperor of Russia was so sensible of the probability that the Swedes would endeavour to recover Finland, and that Bernadotte would seize the present opportunity of acquiring popularity in Sweden, that he had left two divisions of Russian troops in Finland, as much with the view of defending it as of covering St. Petersburg.

Finding, however, that Bernadotte, so far from yielding to the earnest entreaties of France, manifested a spirit of animosity against the Emperor Napoleon, he concluded that he incurred no risk in offering him his alliance. Accordingly, he sent him one of his aides-de-camp to propose an interview.

Bernadotte's vanity was not proof against this invitation. Shutting his eyes to the motive which caused his alliance to be thus courted, he hastened like a madman to rivet those chains which he might, sword in hand, have broken asunder. He preferred receiving his investiture of a throne from the power which has oppressed the Swedes for the last century, rather than render himself worthy of the choice made of him, by avenging the insults which Russia has inflicted upon Sweden. Had the Swedes called him to the throne for no other

purpose than that he should place them at the mercy of the Muscovites? In that case, they had no occasion for him: it was needless for them to search the ranks of the French army for a man who might bring them under such a subjection, since they had Gustavus at command. Their first impulse, after deposing this prince, was to throw themselves into the arms of France. Could the latter nation have imagined that at the moment of her being at war with the enemies the most to be dreaded by a prince called to reign over Sweden, that prince would, of his own accord, place himself at the mercy of the Russians, in order to prevent the French from breaking asunder the fetters reserved to enchain him?

This could only be the act of a madman, or of one whose heart is steeped in gall, and whose soul cannot exist without gratifying its revenge; and a revenge founded upon nothing else but the many benefits conferred upon him by the Emperor, and the indulgence he had so much abused! After the transactions in the western provinces, at Paris, Jena, Eylau, and Antwerp, the Emperor should have sent him before a council of war; instead of which, he heaped favours upon him, and was rewarded with ingratitude. Delighted at the unexpected result of his proposals, the Emperor Alexander ordered the two divisions in Finland to embark for Courland whilst the season was still favourable. This accession of strength was more than a compensation for the losses which his army had suffered, and placed it in a condition which gave less cause to apprehend the result of any signal event that might occur.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Influence exercised by the persons who surrounded the Emperor—Illusion of Murat —Anxiety to advance upon Moscow, because it is found impossible to return to Paris—Rumours afloat—Battle of the Moskwa—Effect produced upon public opinion by the burning of Moscow.

THE Emperor felt less uneasiness at Bernadotte's desertion, however painful the event, than at the approach of the bad season, and the obstacles it threw in the way of his ulterior measures.

He was the more anxious to fight the Russian army, as it was probable that if he could succeed in forcing it to an action before the arrival of the corps which the treaty of Abo had placed at its disposal, he would, by a judicious application of the advantages he had already secured, obtain such decisive successes, that the arrival of the troops which were hastening from Finland would make very little alteration in the course of events he would have at his command after the gain of a battle. But it was necessary that every thing should be brought to a close before the setting-in of the bad season, which always occurs at a certain period, and which ought to serve as a guide in every undertaking. Had not the Emperor been under the controul of circumstances; had he been enabled to place his troops in cantonments, he would have returned to Wilna, and set his springs in motion for revolutionising Poland.

He would have passed the winter in occupations as intense as had engaged his attention at Warsaw five years before, and would have probably doubled his armies by levies of troops, either in the Grand Duchy, or in the provinces he had just wrested from the Russians. On the one hand, how-

ever, the events that had occurred, and the character of the campaign, were obstacles to his intentions; and on the other, the principal members of the Lithuanian nobility felt no anxiety to support so immense an army during the winter; besides which, they did not consider that the Russian army had been so signally defeated as to justify their exposing themselves, and taking a part in encouraging a general rise throughout the country.

A still greater obstacle was to be found in the character of the individuals who surrounded the Emperor; each was a prey to his own peculiar ambition. If the staff of the army had still consisted of men of the same stamp as those who had composed it in the early wars of the revolution, it is probable that affairs would have taken a very different turn.

Ever since the system pursued by the government had consecrated the return to monarchical principles, the old nobility had again rallied in its train; the warlike youth who issued from their ranks had solicited the favour of following the career of arms. They had vied with each other in eagerness to enter the service; and they soon occupied, if not the first places in the army, at least many situations of high trust. Every marshal of France or general officer had some of them amongst his aides-de-camp and his staff. The greater part of the cavalry regiments were commanded by officers belonging to those families. They were already beginning to make their appearance in the infantry regiments. The whole of this young nobility had sincerely bound themselves to the Emperor's fortunes, because they were easily animated by the thirst for renown. They delighted in facing dangers, eagerly courted the opportunity of fighting, but were no less ardent after pleasures, when conscious of having performed the duties expected from them.

Such was the composition, such the qualities and defects of the young men who surrounded the Emperor, the King of Naples, and the Prince of Neufchatel, as well as of those who

held appointments in the numerous grand staff of the army. They exhibited on this occasion a uniformity of opinion, which appeared to represent the sentiments of the whole army. All these young men, finding that they must dismiss every hope of returning to pass the winter in Paris, saw no other alternative for them but Moscow, as a substitute for the French capital. They had hurried over Poland, as butterflies are seen to flutter about from flower to flower; and if a dozen armies had stood in the way of their penetrating to the spot which they longed to reach, they would have still persevered in their object. Moscow appeared to them a centre of every amusement: they were enraptured before-hand with what they expected to find in that city; and their imagination wandered in a perfect bewilderment at the bare anticipation of the pleasures they expected to find in the capital of the Russian empire.

The King of Naples was more especially under the influence of the young officers who surrounded him. He was himself a man of pleasure, and delighted to meet with opinions which encouraged his own wishes; he likewise was desirous of seeing Moscow.

Nothing could exceed the illusion of his mind on military matters. He was persuaded, for instance, that the army had never yet had a cavalry officer at all to be compared to himself. He was unquestionably a man of conspicuous bravery; a quality that may supply the place of many others which cannot, nevertheless, be well dispensed with, when the highest degree of elevation has been attained. He was of a kind and generous disposition, and much beloved by all who approached him. This description ought to be the less suspected, proceeding as it does from one who never had the least intention of renewing an intercourse with him. If I could not refuse my admiration of his impetuous valour, I mistrusted his temerity, which would have been productive of disastrous consequences, had not the Emperor been always on his guard

against the mad expeditions of a man who was so much in his confidence.

It was for the misfortune of France that this prince had been recalled to the army in Poland. The reports and information obtained by the light troops that followed the track of the Russian army always passed through his hands, in his capacity of general-in-chief of the cavalry. The Emperor never received them but through him.

The King of Naples represented the moral power of the Russian army as broken down; its physical strength as exhausted; adding, that it could only retreat slowly, and with great difficulty. He insisted that if hotly pursued for a few days longer, it would be unable to avoid a battle; and a battle was an event quite indispensable to us.

The Emperor could not avoid paying attention to the representations of a man who spoke every day the same language, and who was known to be unsparing of his person on a field of battle.

The Prince of Neufchatel did not differ in opinion from the King of Naples. Every one, however, preferred marching upon Moscow, rather than returning back to Wilna or Witepsk, where all felt a dread of passing the winter.

These entreaties obtained additional weight with the Emperor, when he considered that what he had ordered to be done in Poland was scarcely begun, or, to speak more correctly, had not yet been thought of. Dances went on at Wilna, and gambling, with all its consequences, at Warsaw; and the delay in the execution of his plans was ascribed to the want of confidence evinced by the Polish nation, so long as no battle should have been fought between the contending armies, which might give some stability to the destinies of Poland.

It was accordingly determined that the army should march forward, and come to action with the Russians. The same motives which had caused the diplomatic body to be sum-

moned to Warsaw in 1806, occasioned its appearance at Wilna in 1812. The Empress herself, whether she was aware of this determination, or was desirous of undertaking the journey, allowed the report to circulate about her immediate attendants. The Emperor set his army in motion, not so much with the view of marching to Moscow, as to offer battle to the Russian army on the earliest opportunity, and previously to the arrival of its divisions from Finland, and of the army of Moldavia, which would compel him to adopt a different plan of operations. The most intense feeling of uneasiness prevailed in Paris. However great the confidence which was habitually reposed in the French army, it had never entered into the imagination of any one that it would attempt to advance so far into the Russian empire.

Loud complaints were made of the total absence of our former influence over foreign cabinets, which was in no instance more evident than in its being at a loss where to fix the lever which was to act upon Sweden, and upon Bernadotte in particular. "Why," was it said, "did we not select a plenipotentiary from our closets? we should then have made sure of the result of the negotiation."

All hope had not yet been laid aside; but no surprise would have been felt at the news of any disastrous event. When the bulletin was received of the celebrated battle of the Moskwa, which was fought on the 7th September, 1812, at about twenty-five leagues from Moscow, it would have been a source of much greater satisfaction had the event therein described taken place nearer home: nothing but the intense interest felt in that event would have had the effect of engrossing the public attention.

The artillery of the Invalids fired a hundred rounds, and *Te Deum* was sung in all the churches. Joy was, no doubt, pictured in every countenance; but it had not dispelled the uneasiness which pervaded all ranks.

Tranquillity reigned all over France and in Italy: in France,

especially, not the slightest agitation was heard, and all appeared unanimous in their desire to enjoy uninterrupted repose. The Emperor was in the habit of writing every day to Paris; and he daily received an estafette, with the reports and correspondence of each of his ministers.

A few days after the receipt of the bulletin of the battle of the Moskwa, intelligence was brought of the entrance of the army into Moscow. Hope began to revive, because it was supposed that the army would find in the Russian capital every resource it stood in need of, and that the enemy had retreated by the road of Twer for the purpose of covering St. Petersburg; it appearing that the King of Naples, at the head of all the cavalry, had taken the road leading from Moscow to that city.

The illusion was soon dispelled, and made way for the most intense uneasiness. Intelligence was soon received of the burning of that immense capital, and of the march of the Russian army, which had concealed its movement from our own, by causing a small corps to retreat towards Moscow after the battle, whilst the main body took the road of Kalouga, Toula, and Zaraisk. It formed a junction at these places; and being thus stationed on our right flank, it found itself at a much shorter distance from Smolensko than we were, and rendered the position of Moscow untenable, especially since the event of the fire, which had destroyed all the resources we had so confidently relied on. This calamity occurred at a most unfortunate moment: the month of October and the bad season were close at hand; the inhabitants had fled, and every thing presaged evil to us. On the other hand, Moscow was reduced to ashes. The defeated Russian army was recruiting itself with difficulty behind the Nara. It was natural therefore to expect that, stunned by such disasters, Alexander would accept of a peace. Every intelligence obtained from the interior led to this conclusion. St. Petersburg was in the greatest alarm. It was expected that the

French would move upon the northern capital; and an apprehension was entertained that Kutusoff would be unable to prevent such a movement, his forces being supposed to be either paralysed or destroyed. Preparations were made for evacuating St. Petersburg; and every thing afforded an indication of the deep anxiety felt on the occasion by the government and the nation at large. There could therefore be no doubt as to the course necessary to be adopted. A retrograde movement would have raised the hopes, and doubled the strength of the enemy: it was necessary to assume an appearance at least of self-confidence, to leave a little to chance, and to profit of the terror we had inspired in order to open a negotiation. The Emperor decided upon this course; and it would no doubt have had all the success anticipated from it, if the sovereign of that country, notwithstanding all his power, were not often the most dependent of men. But the murmurs of the high nobility, the threats of the English commissioners who failed not to revive the recollection of a recent catastrophe, did not allow him to consult the best interests of his empire. He was compelled to reject overtures of the advantages of which he must, in his then condition, have been fully sensible. His generals received orders not to relax in their exertions, but to collect all the resources at their disposal; they were, nevertheless, as lavish of generous protestations as insensible to the ravages to which their country was a prey: they never ceased their pacific assurances, and laid great stress upon the evils of war, and their desire to bring them to an end. These assurances, which were repeated at the advanced-posts as well as at Kutusoff's head-quarters, produced the desired effect. Murat and Lauriston fell into the snare, and communicated their hopes to the Emperor. The state of affairs gave them great plausibility; he imbibed them also, and prolonged his stay in the expectation of the opening of negotiations which never took place. These delays, and a feint which was carried on under cover of the armistice, had at last the effect of

explaining to him the intentions and the good faith of the Russians. The retreat commenced from that moment. Nothing could be more unexpected than the misfortunes of which it was to be the forerunner. Attempts were nevertheless already making to work upon public opinion. The clergy could hardly disguise their sentiments on the subject of the captivity of their chief, and were incessant in their underhand endeavours to shake the affection of the country people for the Emperor. It must, however, be allowed, that when he embarked in that painful religious discussion, he had only sought the interests of the Church, and had adopted no measure that had not been concerted with the prelacy. The documents annexed will afford proofs of his prudence and circumspection in matters of so delicate a nature.

AFFAIRS OF THE COUNCIL.

QUESTIONS

ADDRESSED TO THE CHIEF COMMISSION, WITH ITS REPLIES.

FIRST SERIES.

Questions which interest all Christendom.

Is the government of the Church arbitrary? Can the Pope, by reference to temporal interests, refuse his interference in spiritual affairs?

It is an undoubted fact, that for some time past the Court of Rome has been narrowed within the limits of a small number of families; that the affairs of the Church are examined there, and discussed by a small number of prelates and theologians, selected from the petty localities of the environs of Rome, and by no means calculated to take an enlarged view of the interests of the universal Church, nor to form an accurate judgment of them.

Under these circumstances, is it expedient to assemble a council?

Would it not be advisable that the consistory or special council of the Pope should be composed of prelates of all nations, in order to enlighten his Holiness?

Supposing that it be admitted that there is no necessity for making any alteration in the existing organization, does not the Emperor unite in his own person the rights appertaining to the Kings of France, the Dukes of Brabant, and other sovereigns of the Netherlands, the Kings of Sardinia, the Dukes of Tuscany, &c. &c. not only as concerns the nomination of cardinals, but every other privilege?

SECOND SERIES.

Questions peculiar to France.

Has his Majesty the Emperor, or his ministers, infringed the *Concordat*?

Is the condition of the clergy in France ameliorated or deteriorated since the Concordat has been in activity?

Admitting that the French government has not violated the Concordat, can the Pope arbitrarily refuse the ordination of such archbishops and bishops as have been nominated, and ruin religion in France as he has ruined it in Germany, which for these last six years has been without bishops?

As the French government, on its side, has not violated the Concordat, if the Pope, on the other hand, should refuse to fulfil it, it is the intention of his Majesty to consider it as null and void. But, under such circumstances, what is the proper course to pursue, in order to insure the advantages of religion? His Majesty addresses this question to prelates not less distinguished for their information in all ecclesiastical affairs than for their attachment to his person.

THIRD SERIES.

Questions as to the actual condition of affairs.

The subjoined bull of excommunication has been published. It has been printed and clandestinely diffused through the whole of Europe. What measures are requisite to be resorted to, in order that the Popes, in periods of disturbance and calamity, may not be urged to commit abuses of power, as unconformable to Christian charity as to the independence and honour of the throne?

REPLIES

OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL TO THE QUESTIONS PROPOSED BY HIS MAJESTY.

FIRST SERIES.

Questions which interest the whole Christian world.

First Question.—Is the government of the Church arbitrary?

Reply.—In order to meet this question fairly, we consider it expedient to sketch a picture of the government of the Church. The Holy Scriptures, tradition, and the history of the Church, are the sources whence we shall draw all that we mean to say on this important subject; and it will be clearly demonstrated that the government in question entirely excludes arbitrary principles.

Our Saviour, when about to construct his church, selected twelve apostles among

his disciples; and from those twelve he chose one whom he called Peter, as if, says Bossuet, to prepare the work which he intended to erect on that rock: and he conferred on him not only a primacy of honour, but also a primacy of authority and jurisdiction over the entire Church. The prerogative thus granted to the chief of the apostles did not expire with him; it is intended to last as long as the Church herself; and it will be transmitted in a pure and integral state to all his successors in the seat where he has established himself.

Meanwhile, the apostles did not remain in ignorance of the powers conferred by Jesns Christ on their chief. He also conferred on them a direct authority to govern the Church, but subordinate to St. Peter's chair, which was always destined to constitute its common centre. Hence expressions so commonly met with in the holy fathers when speaking of the Roman See, which they term the source of unity, the Mother Church, which holds in her hand the sceptre of all the other churches, the summit of the episcopacy, whence the ray of government proceeds.

But however supereminent over the rest the principal See of Catholicism may be, its authority is not despotic; but the exercise of it is governed by canons; in other words, by laws common to the entire Church.

"You possess the plenitude of power," St. Bernard wrote to Pope Eugene III.; but you can only employ it in conformity with certain universal laws, which the Holy See has made its own by confirming them. Such has been the opinion of all the Popes, from the very origin of Christianity."

"On whom is it more incumbent to observe exactly the decrees of a universal Council, than the bishop of the head See?" were the words of Pope Gelasius, writing to the bishops of Dardania.—"We are," said Pope St. Martin to John, bishop of Philadelphia, "the defenders and the depositaries, and not the transgressors of the holy canons."—"It is by the act of respecting them, and causing them to be respected by others," added Bossuet, "that the Church of Rome contributes to demonstrate her supereminence over all other churches."

It was, doubtless, conformable to the wisdom of the Divine Legislator, while constructing the spiritual society of the Church, to invest its governors with all that was requisite to maintain and perpetuate it. The power which Jesus Christ conferred on St. Peter, in the first instance, and to his apostles in the second, has passed to his successors, and by an uninterrupted transmission will last to the end of the world. It is their province to expound points of doctrine, and to regulate all that concerns the internal government of the Church; but in both their authority has been circumscribed by limits which it is not lawful to violate. In matters of faith, the Holy Scriptures, tradition, and the councils, constitute the rule from which there can be no departing. In all that refers to internal government, the general system of discipline approved and admitted in the Church, constitutes the law, so long as it is not especially repealed.

The most solemu decrees of the Church are passed in the œcumenical councils, in which all the bishops of Catholicism representing the universal Church are convoked. These councils are invested with infallibility; and, conformably to

Catholic principles, their discussions in points of faith and morals are received as the dictates of the Holy Ghost. Jesus Christ himself promised that error should never prevail against his Church. As to the decrees of the other councils in points of doctrine and general discipline, they do not constitute a law for the universal Church, unless it should have adopted them.

However, it is understood that the customs peculiar to individual churches, and which are of ancient origin, are law as respects those churches. They constitute, as it were, their common law; and they are entitled to respect under the rule of a universal Church whose vital breath is charity and conciliation. St. Gregory, referring to the Church of Africa, says, that customs which do not deteriorate the Catholic faith ought to remain inviolate. This is the true liberty to which the Council of Ephesus refers, and which it expressly forbids to distrust. "Our liberty," says Bossuet, speaking of the Gallican Church, "consists in following, as far as it is possible, the track of the common law, which is the source, or rather the foundation of all the good order of the Church, next to the canonical authority of the ordinances, conformably to the general councils and the enactments of the holy fathers.

Such is the nature and form of the government of the Church. Jesus Christ himself laid the foundation. It was his design to perpetuate its existence to the end of the world, to be transmitted through ages of storm in perfect tranquillity; and thence it formed a part of the divine plan to invest it with a fixed and immutable form, independent of time and circumstances. Thence, also, to detach it from every thing of an arbitrary character; for that which is versatile and fluctuating, according to the influence of passions and interests, cannot be of long duration. Thus it is that we perceive the Church, during the persecutions of the three first ages, completely established and perfectly governed. Since that period, God has disposed the hearts of emperors and kings in its favour; their protection is advantageous to it; it is valuable, inasmuch as it imparts a greater momentum of force to the authority of its canons; a more substantial support to its discipline. Its government, consequently, is exerted with more tranquillity; but it is, nevertheless, always the same, as alien from arbitrary principles as it is superior to human vicissitudes.

Second Question.—Can the Pope, in reference to temporal affairs, refuse his interference in spiritual?

Reply.—The primacy of dignity and jurisdiction conferred on the Pope by divine authority, contributes entirely to the spiritual advantage of the Church. Far from wishing to diminish an authority so essential to the constitution of the Church, we conceive that we are paying it a tribute of respect in replying to the question before us:—that, if the temporal affairs have not in themselves any necessary affinity with spiritual; if they do not prevent the head of the Church from performing with freedom and independence the functions of his apostolical ministry, it does not appear to us that the Pope can, on the sole ground of

temporal affairs, refuse his interference in spiritual matters. The distance which divides them is that, in fact, which separates time from eternity.

THIRD AND FOURTH QUESTIONS.—There is no doubt that, for a certain length of time, the Court of Rome has become limited to a small number of families: that the affairs of the Church are discussed therein by a few prelates and theologians, selected from the petty localities of the Roman vicinity, and who are not competent to form clear views of the great interests of the universal Church, nor to form a correct judgment on them.

In this state of things would it be expedient to convoke a council? Would it not be desirable that the consistory or particular council of the Pope should be composed of prelates of all nations, in order to supply his Holiness with adequate information?

REPLY.—"The government of the Church," says Fleury, "is founded in charity and tempered by humility. Hence it is that from the earliest periods the bishop did nothing without the advice of the priests of his church." It is natural to infer that the See of St. Peter was the model of the others as to this form of government.

Hence we see that the clergy of Rome has constituted, from the earliest period, the Pope's council; in which they discussed not only such affairs as were peculiar to the Church of Rome, but also to the entire Catholic world. The letters which were written by the clergy of Rome, when the pontifical chair was vacant, to St. Cyprian and his clergy, and those of St. Cyprian to the clergy of Rome, under the same circumstances, prove the high consideration that the latter enjoyed in the estimation of the Church. This council has undergone no essential modification; and the Roman Church preserves to this day all those antique customs which constitute so many venerable monuments of its primitive institution.

It is known at the present day by the designation of the Holy College. It constituted a special subject of discussion in the Council of Bâle; it was resolved (sect. 23.) "that the cardinals should be selected from all states, with these conditions, among others, that their number should not exceed twenty-four; and that there should be never more than one-third of the same kingdom; nor more than that of the same diocese. Various obstacles opposed the execution of this decree. The same question was subsequently mooted before the Council of Trent. All the speakers on the side of the King of France revived the propositions which the Council of Bâle had adopted. This council limited itself to deciding (sect. 54.), that the Pope should select his cardinals from all nations, as far as that could be conveniently done, and according as they should be found worthy of the honour. The council did not conceive that it was empowered to go farther; and the reason for this, given by M. de Pibrac, ambassador from the French King to the council, in his letter to his Majesty, is remarkable. "The fathers assembled in council have conceived," said he, "that they were not entitled to prescribe to the Pope what he ought to do as respected the choice of cardinals."—*Mémoire sur le Conseil de Trente.*

This exposition supplies us with the answers to the two foregoing questions. And, in the first place, we do not consider the assembling of a council indispensable, since the Council of Trent, which was the last of our general councils, was expressly occupied with the consideration of the subject. Moreover, if the question here respects a general council, no such council can be held without the presence of the head of the Church. Otherwise it would not be deemed to represent the universal Church. Fleury says so in express terms. "The Pope's authority has always been an indispensable requisite to general councils." (*Quatrième Discours sur l'Histoire Ecclésiastique.*) If, on the other hand, the question only refers to a national council, its authority would be inadequate to the settlement of a question which embraces the universal interests of Catholicism.

As to the question, if it be not requisite that the consistory or special council of the Pope be composed of all nations, we shall limit ourselves in this place to the expression of our wishes for the execution of the measure,—a measure, moreover, of the greatest moderation—brought forward on this head by the Council of Trent, and which contains the substance of the demand made by his Majesty.

Fifth Question.—It being granted that there is no necessity for making changes in the existing organization, does not the Emperor unite in his own person the rights which appertained to the Kings of France, the Dukes of Brabant, and other sovereigns of the Low Countries, the Kings of Sardinia, the Dukes of Tuscany, &c. whether as regards the nomination of cardinals or any other prerogative?

Reply.—The prerogative enjoyed by Catholic sovereigns of nominating cardinals, and other prerogatives of the same character, are testimonials of the Church's gratitude for the protection which sovereigns extend to her. These prerogatives have been consecrated by time, and have been transmitted with their other titles to successive princes. Under this view, it is our opinion that his Majesty has a right to claim prerogatives similar to those actually attached to the united territories at the point of time when they were incorporated with the French empire.

SECOND SERIES.

Questions peculiar to France.

First Question.—Has the Emperor or his ministers violated the Concordat?

Reply.—The Concordat has always been observed by his Majesty and his ministers, and it does not appear to us that the Pope can justly complain of any important neglect of it. It is true that during his residence in Paris, the Pope transmitted to his Majesty complaints respecting a certain number of the organic articles added to the clauses of the Concordat, and such as he considered contrary to the free and entire exercise of the Catholic religion. But many of the articles of which his Holiness complained are only applications of the maxims or customs received

in the Gallican Church, or the consequences flowing from them, from which neither the Emperor nor the French clergy had the power of departing.

Some others, it is true, contain regulations which might be very prejudicial to the Church, if executed to the letter. There is full reason to believe that they have been added to the Concordat, as contingent regulations, as conciliations rendered necessary to pave the way for the re-establishment of the Catholic worship; and we entertain sanguine hopes from the justice and piety of his Majesty, that he will deign to revoke or modify them in such a manner as to dissipate the disquietudes which they have occasioned.

Under this persuasion, we have taken the liberty of submitting to his Majesty the articles I. XXVI. and XXXVI. which have elicited the strongest and most just complaints.

Art. I. "No bull, brief, rescript, mandate, provision, signature employed provisionally, nor other dispatches of the Court of Rome, even when they only concern individuals, can be received, published, printed, or in any manner put in execution, without the authority of government."

It would be desirable if an exception were made in favour of penitential briefs (*brefs de la pénitencerie*). In truth, the exception is a matter of right: but it might be disputed in conformity with article I. The old parliaments never omitted to make the exception formal whenever they had to pronounce a decision on enactments which emanated from the Court of Rome.

Art. XXVI. "The bishops cannot ordain any ecclesiastic, unless he can prove himself to be in possession of property producing at least an annual income of three hundred francs, and unless he has attained the age of twenty-five."

The two clauses contained in this article are highly prejudicial to religion under existing circumstances, and tend to deprive it of the greater portion of such ministers as are indispensably necessary to its cultivation and to the wants of the people.

I. As the French Church no longer holds out to families the hopes of fortune or advancement, which the ancient clergy exhibited, the great proportion of the young men who devote themselves to the Church belong to a class in confined circumstances. Among the fathers of families in a condition to give their children an annual income of three hundred francs, which supposes funded property to the amount of ten thousand francs at least, there are few who would allow them to embrace a calling which exacts sacrifices and painful duties, without holding out the compensation of any temporal advantage. The resource supplied before the revolution by a multitude of qualifications derived from small livings, which were accepted by the Church as substitutes for patrimonial qualifications, no longer exists. If up to the present time his Majesty had not deigned to assent to our representations in favour of such young clergymen, who were unable to establish the qualification prescribed by article XXVI., religion would be deficient in the due number of its ministers. Since this law requires perpetual dispensations, would it not be as well to revise it altogether?

II. Two serious inconveniences result from the clause which does not per-

mit bishops to ordain any ecclesiastic till twenty-five years of age. The first is, that it augments considerably the duration and expense of clerical education. The course of study necessary to a preparation for holy orders is in general terminated before the prescribed age, and the interval which elapses till then exposes the pupils either to the chance of losing a relish for their calling, or the spirit necessary to it, if they pass it in the world; or, if they pass it in the seminaries, to an augmentation of expense. The second inconvenience which results from this article XXVI. is, that the bishops, urged by the wants of their dioceses, are compelled to hurry the ordinations without being able to observe the intervals wisely prescribed by the canons between the degrees of subdeacon and priest. His Majesty would remedy this double inconvenience by permitting the bishops to confer orders on those who have attained the age of twenty-two, conformably to ancient regulation. It is as much the interest as the duty of the bishops to admit none to the degree of subdeacon but such as those whose calling and worth appear to them sufficiently proved.

Art. XXXVI. "The vicars-general of the vacant dioceses shall continue their functions, even after the death of the bishop, until the substitution of his successor."

According to the principles of canon law the vicars-general derive their powers from the bishops; they constitute, in fact, one and the same person; *una eademque persona.* The right of representing him, and the authority which this right imparts, expires with him; it being understood, however, that if the bishop die out of his town or diocese, the vicars-general administer the office by valid and legitimate right, up to the moment when the chapter of the cathedral church become cognisant of the bishop's death. From that moment the chapter becomes legitimately invested with the episcopal jurisdiction; and it is to the chapter alone that the right appertains of nominating the vicars-general, who govern while the see is vacant. This principle is indisputable; and it has doubtless only fallen into abeyance because that, at the period when the organic laws were published, there were no regular chapters extant in the cathedrals. Since their re-establishment the right of administering the vacant dioceses by vicars-general has been resigned to them; so that, in fact, this article XXXVI. is not only in contradiction to the canon law, but to the practice observed at this day. While submitting these remarks to his Majesty's wisdom, we cannot refrain from feeling and declaring, in reply to the first question of the second series, that neither his Majesty nor his ministers have committed any essential violation of the Concordat.

Second Question.—Is the condition of the French clergy ameliorated or deteriorated since the Concordat has been in operation?

Reply.—Even had his Majesty confined himself to the strict execution of the Concordat, this memorable treaty, to which we are indebted for the free and public worship *of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman faith, which is the faith of the great*

majority of French citizens—would be the greatest benefit which the Emperor could have granted to the clergy and people of his empire.

But his Majesty has not confined himself to the obligations which he took upon himself by the provisions of the Concordat. Every successive year of his reign has been distinguished by important concessions, not made as necessary consequences of his engagements with the sovereign Pontiff, and which could only have been suggested to his Majesty by his respect for the Catholic religion, and his love for his people. It would occupy too much time to recapitulate all these concessions: we will merely advert to the principal. The endowment of vicars-general and chapters; in the first instance twenty-four thousand; subsequently, thirty thousand chapels of ease provided for by the state; four hundred scholarships, and eight hundred demi-scholarships founded in the various dioceses, for the furtherance of ecclesiastical studies; national edifices, or considerable sums supplied to a large number of bishops for the establishment of their schools; provisional exemption from the conscription for such students as are designated by the bishops as called to the priesthood; the permission granted to the clergy to wear their religious garments in public; the call in the councils-general of the departments to contribute to the support of the bishops, the vicars-general, and the chapters, and to provide for the wants of the religious establishment and its ministers; decrees for the purpose of restoring to the Church trusts a portion of the revenues which they had lost; re-establishment of religious congregations, devoted by the nature of their institution to the gratuitous instruction and charitable care of the indigent classes; the decree which confers on those congregations an august and powerful protectress in the person of the Emperor's mother; the annual contribution which they receive from government; and the just expectation of receiving more; an honourable retreat provided for the bishops by the establishment of the chapter of St. Denis, &c. So many favours already received constitute a pledge of what we may yet expect from the attachment of his Majesty to the Catholic religion, and which demonstrates to all Europe, that if by virtue of the Concordat he stands engaged to re-establish in France the freedom and publicity of the national worship, he has since that transaction availed himself of a variety of means and occasions to confirm, to perpetuate it, and to restore it, as far as circumstances would permit, to its pristine splendour.

It would be to resist the evidence of facts, did we not declare, that the condition of the French clergy is remarkably improved since the Concordat has been in operation. But while thus presenting to his Majesty a tribute of our sincere gratitude, it may, perhaps, be allowed us to pour forth at the foot of his throne our still ungratified aspirations for a more free exercise of our religion. Should his Majesty condescend to permit us, we would take the liberty of presenting our humble remonstrances on a variety of subjects, which appear to us interesting to the cause of religion and morality, and consequently to the general well-being of society.

Third Question.—It being granted that the French government has not violated the Concordat, can the Pope arbitrarily refuse ordination to such archbishops

and bishops as have been nominated, and thus ruin the cause of religion in France, as he has already ruined it in Germany, which, for twenty years, has been unprovided with bishops?

Reply.—The Concordat is a synallagmatic contract between the head of the State and the head of the Church, by which each enters into a reciprocally binding engagement. It must also be considered in the light of a public treaty, vitally interesting to the French nation and the Catholic Church. By this treaty, each of the august contracting parties acquires rights, and takes on himself obligations. The Concordat confirms to his Majesty the same right of nominating to archbishoprics and bishoprics, which the King of France before him exercised, by virtue of the concordat signed between Leo X. and Francis I. It reserves to the Pope the right of granting canonical ordination to such archbishops and bishops as shall be nominated by his Majesty, according to the forms established in France previous to the change of government.—(Art. IV. of the Concordat.)

In this manner the rights of the sovereign, who cannot avoid sympathising with the choice of the chief pastors, whose position gives them a great influence over public opinion; and the rights of the Church, from whence alone is derived all spiritual jurisdiction, are mutually conciliated, reciprocally sustained and established.

But the right of granting canonical ordination, which the Pope claims by the existing regulations of the Church, cannot be despotically exercised. Independent of the general and invariable maxim which we assert, that the head of the Church must govern it according to the canons, it constitutes one of the express clauses of the concordat of 1516, that the Pope is bound to grant bulls of ordination to individuals nominated by the King, or to state his canonical reasons for the refusal. Were we to admit that the Pope could arbitrarily and causelessly refuse ordination, we should be also compelled to admit that he is not bound by a treaty which he has himself solemnly ratified; and that he may violate a sacred engagement which he has contracted with the Emperor, with France, and with the universal Church, to which the Concordat secures the protection of the most powerful sovereign in the universe.

These principles are obvious. The Pope, beyond a doubt, does not deny their truth, and cannot consider himself justified in arbitrarily refusing bulls of ordination, and without assigning any cause. His Holiness himself, in a letter addressed from Savona, the 28th of last August, to Cardinal Caprara, enters into the reasons of his refusal.

It will not surely be said, that under circumstances perilous to the Church of France, the members of the episcopacy, when consulted by the Emperor, their protector, can be considered as wanting in that profound respect which they entertain for the supreme dignity and sacred person of the head of the Church, when they venture to discuss the above alleged reasons, and lay before the Emperor some remarks on them, which they would not shrink from offering to his Holiness himself, were they admitted to the honour of a conference.

The reasons alleged by his Holiness in the above letter may be reduced to three heads.

1. The first relates to the religious innovations introduced into France since the Concordat, against which, says the Pope, we have so often and so fruitlessly protested.

His Holiness does not enter into any details on the subject of the innovations he complains of. For our part, we know of none that can be adduced as a substantial violation of the Concordat. His Holiness probably alludes to the remonstrances he addressed to the Emperor at the beginning of 1805. We refer the reader to what we have said on this subject, while discussing the first question of the second series. It has been seen that the great majority of the grievances set forth in these representations relate only to points of discipline in reference to which the Gallican Church reserves to itself the right of governing itself according to its maxims and customs; and that as relates to such organic articles as are less favourable to ecclesiastic discipline, the Emperor has condescended to refrain from pressing their strict execution. Let us add that, since 1805, those articles of discipline which the Pope now represents as important and dangerous innovations, have been constantly in operation, without, till lately, having furnished the Pope a plea to refuse ordination to bishops nominated by his Majesty.

2. A second reason for his refusal of bulls of ordination, alleged by the Pope, is founded, according to his letter to Cardinal Caprara, on political events and measures of which we have not sufficient cognisance, and of which it is not our province to judge.

The chief event is the decree of 1809 for uniting the Roman state to the French empire. Is this a canonical reason? Is it supported by the principles or the spirit of the Catholic religion? Religion teaches us not to confound things spiritual with things temporal. The jurisdiction which the Pope exercises *jure divino* in the Church, is purely spiritual. It is the only authority which the Prince of the Apostles received from Jesus Christ, and consequently the only authority he can transmit to his successors. The temporal sovereignty of the Popes is but a contingency which has nothing to do with their spiritual ministry. The former commenced with the Church, and will last as long as the Church; in other words, as long as the world. The latter is a human institution. It is not comprised in the promises made by Jesus Christ to St. Peter and his successors. It may be taken from them, just as it has been conferred on them by men, and by circumstances. It is in their spiritual authority that the real grandeur of the Popes consists. Whether the Pope be a sovereign or not, his authority in the universal Church, of which he is the head, and his relations with the subordinate churches, will always remain the same. Whatever may be his political situation, he retains all the powers attached to the chief see in Christendom; but it must never be forgotten that those powers have been received for the advantage of the faithful and for the due government of the Church. We feel therefore sanguinely persuaded that his Holiness would no longer refuse to exercise those powers,

were he convinced, as we are, who have an opportunity of seeing things more closely, that his refusal can only be prejudicial to the Church.

Could it be supposed, for the sake of argument, that the invasion of Rome is deemed sufficient motive for refusing ordination to the recently nominated bishops, the following considerations would readily solve the difficulty.

The refusal of the bulls on this ground can have no weight whatever in the actual discussion, unless it be taken for granted that the invasion was a violation of the Concordat.

The Concordat stipulates nothing in favour of the political interests of the Holy See. The Emperor therein treats with the Pope in no other capacity than as head of the Church. While the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope over the French Church is recognised and respected, the bonds by which that Church is attached to the Church of Rome, as the centre of Catholic unity, are not relaxed, and the Concordat subsists in all its integrity.

The Concordat did not guarantee to the Pope the possession of the Roman States : the occupation of Rome is consequently no infraction of the Concordat. This event is a political affair, which has no relation to the order of things regulated by the Concordat : an affair entirely temporal, which can have no proper influence over spiritual affairs, unless it be intended to confound what the Gospel, and the whole traditional authority of the first ages of the Church, has taught us to dissociate.

The Pope in his letter to Cardinal Caprara recognises this distinction between things temporal and spiritual; but he adds, that he cannot concede the defence of the Church's patrimony without violating his duties and becoming perjured.

We by no means assert that the Pope was compelled to sacrifice the defence of the Church's patrimony. As a temporal sovereign, he had, like all other sovereigns, an indisputable right to defend his possessions. Like them, it was competent for him to employ for that purpose the political means which Providence had placed in his hands, or to make an appeal to others. But his duty did not render it indispensable that he should succeed in this object. The stern law of necessity would have sufficiently absolved him in the eyes of the Church and of posterity.

Even on the supposition that the occupation of Rome would sanction the Pope in exercising his spiritual authority against the Emperor, the refusal of bulls of ordination does not appear to be a measure calculated to advance the object which his Holiness has in view.

In fact, what is there in common between the temporal interests of the Pope and the spiritual wants of the French Church ? If indeed the Emperor had exacted from the recently nominated bishops any declaration or proceeding contrary to the the Catholic faith or to the authority of the Holy See, the Pope might have a just plea for refusing to admit them to his communion, and for withholding canonical ordination. But nothing of the kind is intended. The Emperor has declared in the most solemn manner that it was not his wish to make the slightest innovation in matters of religion; and the claim made in his behalf for bulls of ordination obviously

proves that it is his desire to adhere strictly to the letter of the Concordat, and secure all its spiritual authority to the Holy See. The Pope, therefore, has no real title to infringe the Concordat. Is it for the private advantage of the Emperor that the Concordat has been ratified? Was it not rather for the exclusive benefit of the Catholic religion, which at that time was threatened with utter extinction throughout the entire boundary of France? Shall it be said that the head of the Church wishes to consider the interests of religion and the salvation of souls as secondary to his temporal interests, and to sacrifice the former to the latter?

What, it may be asked, would have been thought of Clement VII., when Rome was taken by assault, and sacked by the troops of Charles V., if the Pope, in order to avenge himself of that prince, had declared that he would abandon all the churches of Austria to their fate? Will Pius VII., who has so honourably to himself concurred in re-establishing the Catholic religion in France, expose himself to the reproach of destroying his own work?

If it be objected that the Pope having revoked, by his decree of June 10, all the privileges, acts of grace, and apostolical indulgences, granted by his Holiness or his predecessors to the individuals comprised in the sentence of excommunication; and that, consequently, the Emperor himself is provisionally defeased of all the rights which the Concordat assigns to him, it would be no difficult matter to dissipate the illusion of such an argument, by observing, that the bull in question does not make the least allusion to the Concordat; and that, in fact, the Concordat is neither a privilege, nor a power, nor an indulgence, but a solemn treaty, the revocation of which cannot take place except by the mutual consent of the contracting parties.

3. The third reason alleged for the Pope's refusal is founded on his actual position. We cannot give a better detail of it than in transcribing what he himself says on the subject in his letter to Cardinal Caprara:—

"Notwithstanding such a state of things, God knows how ardently we desire to confer their legitimate pastors on the vacant churches of France, after having loaded the churches with so many mementos of our regard; and how much we desire to find any expedient for doing so in a manner that may at once be conformable to circumstances, to the nature of our ministry and our duty. But would it be proper to act in an affair of such vital importance without consulting our legitimate counsellors? Besides, how are we to consult them? since, separated as we are from them by violence, not only all means of communicating with them have been taken from us; but, moreover, all the requisite means for dispatching affairs of such moment: indeed we have not, up to the present time, been allowed the favour of having one of our secretaries in attendance."

To these last remonstrances of the Pope we can make no other reply than ourselves to lay them before the eyes of his Majesty, who will not fail to perceive their weight and justice.

Fourth Question.—The French government not having violated the Concordat, if the Pope on his part refuse to execute it, it is the intention of his Majesty

to consider it as abrogated. But under such circumstances, what measures will be expedient for the benefit of religion ?

Reply.—Should the Pope persist in refusing to execute the Concordat, it is certain, in strict reasoning, that the Emperor would be absolved from its observance, and that he may therefore consider it as abrogated.

But the Concordat is not a transaction of a purely personal nature between the Emperor and the Pope: it is a treaty which constitutes a part of our public law; because it involves the fundamental principles and regulations of the government of the Gallican Church; and it may be requisite to claim its execution, even in the event of the sovereign Pontiff persisting to deny it, as far as he himself is concerned.

It is true that the Concordat must remain *de facto* snspended, as long as the Pope refuses bulls of ordination to the bishops nominated by the Emperor; but while protesting against this illegal refusal, or in appealing either to the Pope himself, when better informed, or to his successor, the Emperor will preserve all the rights secured to him by the Concordat; and time will doubtless furnish means for causing its provisions to be revived and executed on both sides.

But then comes the question, what measures it will be requisite to take for the well-being of the Church, in either event, whether the Concordat be considered as abrogated, or whether it remain in abeyance ?

Since the administration of the Catholic religion cannot exist without the episcopacy, the above question reduces itself to an inquiry as to what steps are requisite to be adopted for supplying the deficiency of the pontifical bulls, and for imparting canonical ordination to the bishops nominated by his Majesty.

It must, in the first place, be laid down as a principle established by the Scriptures, consecrated by every kind of tradition, expressly defined by the Council of Trent, and founded, in fact, on the very nature of things, that the authority and jurisdiction of the ministers of the Church can only emanate from the Church itself. All their powers bear a spiritual character, and are dissociated from the circle of temporal authority. It is to the Church, and the Church alone, as personified by the apostles, and by the bishops, their successors, that Jesus Christ confided the province of teaching, of administering the sacrament, and of directing the members of the Christian faith in the true way of salvation. Now, the Church could neither instruct nor govern, if uninvested with the exclusive power and right of nominating and inaugurating its teachers and its magistrates.

Instruction, the administration of the sacrament, the employment and appointment of its ministers, constitute the most essential points in the constitution of the Church. The Church alone has the privilege of deciding both as regards opinions and morals. It is her province alone to regulate the practice of public worship, and to prescribe the conditions requisite for admission to the sacrament. She alone can confer on her ministers such powers of regulation and jurisdiction as are requisite to impart validity or legitimacy to the exercise of their functions. The Church would no longer constitute a society independent and Catholic, or universal, esta-

blished for every period and clime, and capable of allying itself with every species of government, if she were not free in the choice of her magistrates, or if the employment and jurisdiction of her magistrates emanated from a foreign power. "The Catholic Church," says Bossuet, "adopts this language to the Christian world. You constitute a people, a state, and a society; but Jesus Christ, who is your king, is independent of you, and derives his authority from a higher source. You possess, naturally, no more right to furnish him with ministers, than you have to appoint him your prince. His ministers, consequently, who are your pastors, derive their functions, like himself, from a higher source; and those functions must, of course, proceed from some system established by him. The kingdom of Jesus Christ is not of this world; and any comparison which you may wish to draw between that kingdom and those of this world fails. In one word, natural right gives you nothing which has any connexion with Jesus Christ and his kingdom; and you possess no other right than such as you discover in the immemorial laws and customs of your peculiar social order. Now these immemorial customs, beginning with the times of the apostles, prescribe that the pastors already appointed should in turn appoint others."

In fact, during three ages of persecution, the Church has exercised, in its utmost latitude, the privilege of nominating and ordaining her ministers: nor could the protection afforded her by Christian princes have a tendency to deprive her of that privilege. "The world," says Fenelon, "while submitting to the Church, has not acquired the right of subjecting the Church. Princes, while becoming children of the Church, have not obtained the right to become her masters. The Church remains as free under the predominance of Christian emperors, as she was during the times of idolatrous and persecuting sovereigns."

It may therefore be laid down as an unquestionable and fundamental principle, that the Church alone has authority to choose her pastors and magistrates, and to invest them with the powers requisite for the valid and legitimate performance of their functions. And since the question before us principally concerns the bishops, whose functions must be inoperative unless they can combine the powers of jurisdiction with the powers of the order, it is obvious that it must be the province of the Church alone to confer that jurisdiction which the major part of the functions of the episcopacy of necessity exact.

From the apostolical times to the present, the Church has never recognised any bishop but such as she has herself ordained; but the mode of conferring the ordination has not been always the same. In this particular, as in many others, the discipline of the Church has suffered changes prescribed by the change of circumstances.

In the early ages of the Church, the bishops were nominated by the suffrages of the co-provincial bishops, of the clergy, and the people of the Church, for the vacancy of which it was necessary to provide; and the election was confirmed by the metropolitan bishop; or if the latter bishop was to be elected, then by the council of the province. Subsequently, the Emperors and other Christian princes interested themselves in a great degree in the nomination of bishops. By degrees,

the people and the clergy of the local vicinity were no longer convoked; and the election devolved on the chapter of the cathedral church, but always required consent from the prince, and confirmation from the metropolitan and the provincial council. The abeyance into which these assemblies fell, the frequent contests to which the elections gave birth, the difficulty of bringing them to a conclusion on the spot, and the advantage which the princes derived from treating directly with the Popes, introduced the custom of referring these matters to the Holy See; and by slow degrees, the sovereign Pontiffs found themselves in possession of the right to confirm the major portion of the bishops.

Such was the condition of things at the period of the Council of Bâle, whose decrees relative to the nomination and ordination of bishops the Church of France adopted, in the Pragmatic Sanction, published at Bruges in 1438. The capitular elections were maintained, and the right of confirmation and institution referred to the proper claimants. By virtue of the Concordat of 1515, between Leo X. and Francis I., the nomination of the king was substituted for the election of the chapter, and the confirmation or canonical ordination left to the Pope.

In the midst of all these changes introduced into the regulations of the Church, with regard to the ordination of bishops, the principle of the necessity of an ecclesiastical ordination has remained unchanged. These various changes have always been made with the consent, express or implied, of the Church. It was in the name of the Church, and by its authority, that the elections have successively assumed various forms; that the right of ordaining the nominated bishops has been transferred from the metropolitan and provincial councils to the Popes; and that the capitulary elections have been superseded by the head of the state, by virtue of the Concordats with Leo X. and Pius VII.; and if it should ever be found expedient to adopt another mode of ordination, it would be necessary to commence by obtaining the assent of the Church.

We will go farther. The above approbation would be requisite, even should it merely be proposed to return to one of the methods adopted in preceding ages. An abrogated law is no longer law; and cannot re-assume a legal character, except by means of the authority which has abrogated it. The Church could not be considered as governing herself: she would, in fact, no longer possess the right of enacting laws and regulations for her internal discipline, if it were allowable for any other power to force her resumption of such laws and regulations as she may have abandoned. Therein consisted one of the radical vices of the civil constitution of the clergy, decreed by the Constituent Assembly. The object, as professed, was to restore the Church to the regulations of the first ages, by re-establishing the elections. But, besides that the election decreed by the civil constitution of the clergy did not bear the slightest resemblance to those of the early ages, the Constituent Assembly, which was only invested with political powers, was essentially incompetent to re-establish, by its sole authority, and without the concurrence of the Church, a disciplinary regulation which the Church had abolished.

According to these principles it is evident that even supposing that, by the Pope's

perseverance in refusing bulls of ordination, the Concordat should be regarded as suspended or abrogated, there would exist no authority for the revival of the Pragmatic Sanction, unless the ecclesiastical authority was employed in its re-establishment. We have shown that such a project would be irregular, and infected with the most fatal of all defects, a deficiency of power. We may add, that it would be extremely dangerous, and would become the source of troubles similar to those which the civil appointment of the clergy has created through the whole extent of France. It may, indeed, be relied on, that the resistance of the Christian flocks to any new undertaking of the secular power against the authority of the Church would be still more intense and general, because at the conclusion of the preceding contests the people's minds have become more enlightened as to the argument, and principles have been more perfectly understood. Bishops ordained in contempt of canonic forms would never obtain the confidence of the clergy or the people; and those scandalous scenes, which disgraced the ministry of the constitutional clergy, would be renewed in their dioceses.

What will it be necessary to do for the welfare of religion, if the Pope persist in refusing bulls to the bishops nominated by the Emperor?

The council which his Majesty has honoured with the proposal of this important question, has not the adequate authority to point out the measures fit to be substituted for the Pope's intervention, as regards the confirmation of bishops. Its advice in this respect will only be the opinion of a certain limited number of prelates, unendowed with either power or character, to represent—we will not say the universal Church, to which questions of this kind are not unknown, but the Gallican Church, which is more particularly interested. Consequently, it occurs to us that in a conjuncture of so much delicacy, wherein it is essential not to lose sight of principles sanctioned by religion, and to avoid alarming tender consciences, that his Majesty cannot act more wisely, or more conformably to precedent, than by convoking a National Council, wherein the clergy of his empire may examine the question proposed to us, and point out such means as are proper to prevent the inconveniences of the refusal of the pontifical bulls.

In 1688, when a similar refusal was made by Innocent XI. to ordain the bishops nominated by Louis XIV. in 1682, the parliament of Paris, at the recommendation of the *Procureur-général*, De Harlay, issued a decree to the effect that the King should be solicited to convoke the Provincial Councils, or even a National Council. "This decree," says Hericourt, "is conformable to the common practice in France under similar circumstances; and examples of it are recorded in the 'Proofs of the Privileges of the Gallican Church.'"

NOTE.

When this last reply of the Ecclesiastical Council was submitted to the Emperor, he considered it to be good as far as it went, but incomplete. He sent for M. Davoisin, bishop of Nantes, dictated the following note, and ordered him to communicate its contents to the Council, for the purpose of obtaining a categorical answer.

NOTE DICTATED BY THE EMPEROR.

The Emperor hoped that the Concordat becoming null and void, France would naturally be replaced in the position which she occupied before that treaty. Theologians and canonical lawyers had nothing more to do than to agree in finding what that position was. By the reply of the bishops, his Majesty sees that the question takes a different form, and concurs with this view, that is to say, with the view that the Concordat having abrogated the existing law, it can only be re-established by the same power as caused its abrogation. But his Majesty differs with the bishops in this particular, that it is his opinion that the Gallican Church is not deficient in the desired powers; and to arrive at that conclusion, it is not necessary to inquire whether the Gallican Church is equal to the authority of the Pope, more than whether the Pope is equal in authority to the General Council, the great object being to conciliate and accelerate, and not to spend time in discussion.

But I set out with another principle and opinion. The French Church then rebelled against the authority of Leo X. It required all the power of the King and the secret influence (an influence unknown to the Canons) of the Court of Rome, to obtain its final adherence to that authority. Hence, if I admit that the temporal power cannot of its own authority re-establish the ancient practice, it appears to me that the French Church, which is interested in the question, may be sufficiently authorised to discuss it, and to deliberate as to measures of canonic institution. I have no facts under my hand at present to support this opinion. But it occurs to me that it may be affirmed as a necessary consequence of the right inherent in the Church to institute her own legislation; that if the Concordat became null and void, by any cause whatever, there would be an hiatus in the Church's authority, if that condition which previously existed could not be re-established, *ipso facto*, and by natural right.

There would be no more reason in searching to establish the order of things subsisting in 1500, than to seek for that which was enacted in 900. But the legislation of the Church would be found to have an hiatus, and that hiatus occurring in the transmission of episcopal authority; in other words affecting the source of vitality, it would become indispensable to convoke a National Council, to settle the question finally. In fact, if the National Council has possessed——

[Here the note dictated by the Emperor finished; having been interrupted by the arrival of one of his ministers whom he had sent on a particular mission.]

Continuation of the Reply of the Bishops to the Fourth Question of the Second Series.

This fourth question is thus framed: "The French government not having infringed the Concordat, if, on the other hand, the Pope refuse to execute it, it is the intention of his Majesty to consider it as abrogated. But in such an event, what measures will it be expedient to take for the welfare of religion?" In the me-

morial which we have had the honour of laying before his Majesty, we conclude our reply to this important question with the words, " His Majesty could not act more wisely, or more conformably to precedent, than by convoking a National Council, wherein the clergy of his empire would deliberate on the question proposed, and point out such steps as are likely to avert the inconveniences which the refusal of pontifical bulls may occasion.

His Majesty does not consider that his reply meets the question in a sufficiently satisfactory manner, because it does not decide whether the National Council possesses in itself adequate authority to supply the defect of the pontifical bulls, or whether it might not be ultimately requisite to appeal to a still superior authority.

We have not deemed it right to be explicit on the degree of authority appertaining to the National Council, because the question appears liable to difficulties, and because it is not our province to anticipate and prejudge the decision of the Council. We beg leave to retain this reserve; but we are not the less convinced that the convocation of a National Council is the only canonical track calculated to lead us to the desired object, if the conciliatory means which the wisdom of his Majesty may suggest, do not prevent such a recourse. The following, as appears to us, will be the process which the Council will adopt, in the event of its interposition becoming indispensable.

1st. The Council will commence by addressing respectful remonstrances to the Pope, on the obligations which the Concordat imposes on his Holiness; on the alarming consequences, which a more prolonged refusal will produce; on the necessity under which it will lay the Emperor and the clergy of providing, by some other means, for the preservation of religion, and the perpetuation of the episcopacy. It will then propose such conciliatory measures as circumstances may indicate; and we feel persuaded that these dutiful proceedings will not be without fruit when addressed to a pontiff who has given the Gallican Church so many affecting proofs of his paternal solicitude.

2nd. If, contrary to our expectation, the Pope should still reject the prayers and entreaties of the assembled clergy of France, the Council will then proceed to deliberate on the question which we have not dared to decide; viz. whether it be competent to re-establish or renew a canonical mode of ordination, which may supersede the system established by the Concordat. If it decide that it be competent, it will decree, under favour of his Majesty, a disciplinary regulation on this head; but at the same time declaring that the regulation is only provisional; that the Church of France will never desist from demanding the fulfilment of the Concordat; and that it will always be ready to return to its allegiance, as soon as the Pope, or his successors, shall consent to execute its provisions, as far as they are concerned in them.

3rd. In the event of the Council not considering itself invested with competent powers, there would still remain a recourse to the General Council, the only authority in the Church which is superior to that of the Pope. But it might occur that this recourse would be rendered unattainable, either in the event of the Pope refusing to recognise the General Council, or in the event of political circum-

stances not permitting it to assemble. His Majesty's question, in that case, re-appears on the tapis; and it will be asked what steps are then to be taken for the welfare of religion?

4th. Hitherto we have confined our reasoning within the circle of the laws of ecclesiastical discipline; and in the actual condition of things, it is not allowable to lose sight of those laws. But an article of discipline, instituted for the government and preservation of particular churches, ceases to be obligatory, when it becomes obvious that it is impossible to observe it without exposing one of the most important of the churches to great dangers. If the head of the universal Church should, therefore, give indication of abandoning the Church of France, by refusing to concur, as he ought, in the ordination of the bishops, it cannot be but that a Church of such venerable antiquity, which occupies so eminent a rank in the Catholic world, will find in its own bosom means of self-preservation and perpetuation; she is authorised to recur to the code of ancient law, when, without any fault on her part, the exercise of the new law has become, in this particular, impracticable.

5th. In conclusion, it is our opinion, that after having protested its inviolable attachment to the Holy See, and to the person of the sovereign Pontiff, after having laid claim to the observation of the discipline now actually in operation, the Council may be competent to declare, that considering the impracticability of having recourse to an œcumenic Council, and considering the danger with which the Church is threatened, the ordination imparted, with the aid of this legitimate Council, to his suffragans by the metropolitan bishop, and to the metropolitan himself by the oldest bishop of the province, may be substituted for the pontifical bulls, till such time as the Pope or his successors consent to the execution of the Concordat.

This provisional return to a portion of the ancient ecclesiastical law would be justified by the first of all laws, that of necessity—which the Holy Father has himself recognised, and to which he submitted himself—when, in order to establish the unity of the French Church, he placed himself above the restraint of all ordinary precedents, by suppressing, by an unexampled stretch of authority, all the ancient churches of France, in order to create new ones.

THIRD SERIES.

Questions concerning the existing state of things.

The bull of excommunication of the 10th of June, 1809, being contrary to Christian charity, as well as to the independence and honour of the throne, what steps must be taken, in order that, in times of trouble and calamity, the Popes may not be induced to commit similar excesses of power?

NOTE PRELIMINARY TO THE REPLY.

The Ms. of the reply of the bishops, which we have under our eye, is incomplete. It contains only the preamble and the conclusion. We have had re-

course to another copy, the depositary of which has obliged us by its communication. But not having met with any adequate indication of its authenticity, or even of its fidelity, we have not thought ourselves justified to make use of it in filling up the large hiatus left in our copy.

We shall confine ourselves to the insertion, in this place, of an extract from that part of the reply of the bishops, which is to be found in the communicated copy, and the accuracy of which we do not possess the means of guaranteeing. It appears to dovetail naturally with the preamble and conclusion which we publish, and to indicate very obviously the same train of ideas.

REPLY OF THE BISHOPS.

In order to meet his Majesty's question, it appears to us indispensable to enter into an examination of the bull to which it refers; for if, on one hand, the respect and obedience which we owe to our Sovereign compel us to reply with that frankness and veracity which become our office; on the other hand, the profound veneration and devotion entertained by every Catholic bishop for the sovereign Pontiff, impose it on him, as a no less serious duty, to abstain from all levity in criticising an act emanating from the latter, and the principles and consequences of which are of such pre-eminent importance.

The following is the substance of the bull:

The Pope commences by declaring that he cannot bring himself to believe, that political reasons, military measures, and his refusal to accede to a part of the demands of the French government, can have been the only motives of the invasion of Rome and the Roman states; an invasion which he attributes to the most fatal projects against religion.

His Holiness next refers to his zeal and exertions for the re-establishment of religious worship in France; but, continues he, the Concordat was hardly promulgated before it was annulled by the simultaneous publication of organic articles, of which his Holiness made express complaint to the Sacred College, in his allocution of the 24th May, 1802, in which he denounced them as subversive of the liberty promised to the Catholic faith, and some of them as even indirectly contrary to the directions of the gospel.

The Italian Concordat having been violated in the same manner, these two treaties, far from producing a salutary effect, are become the scourges of the faith.

All the complaints or remonstrances of the Holy See have been eluded. The demands which the French government never ceased to accumulate in its pretensions, placed the Pope in the alternative of either betraying the duties of his high office, or exposing himself to a declaration of war. His Holiness then resolved, not even by a tacit assent, to yield up the temporal dominions committed to his care; and to preserve that territorial independence which is indispensable to the free exercise of spiritual power.

His Holiness subsequently recapitulates the persecutions, by which attempts were made to shake the constancy of his resolution.

While regretting that he is unable to appease the storm by the sacrifice of his life, and that he is reduced to the necessity of losing sight of his natural lenity in order to employ the spiritual arms which are confided to him, his Holiness considers that the total invasion of his states justifies him in fulminating the anathemas permitted by the sacred canons, according to the example of his predecessors.

The bull then declares that all the authors, accomplices, counsellors, and executors of these aggressions, have incurred the penalties of excommunication, as denounced by the canon law, especially by the Council of Trent (Session 22, chap. 11.); and if it be requisite, his Holiness excommunicates and anathematises them anew, without specifically designating any individual.

His Holiness prohibits any infringement of the rights and prerogatives of the persons comprised in this censure; and concludes his bull in the customary form.

From this abstract of the bull of June, 1809, attention is naturally directed to the combination of spiritual and temporal motives, announced in the preamble, and on which is founded the sentence pronounced in the decretory clause.

EXTRACT.

The proposals addressed by the Emperor to his Holiness appertain chiefly to diplomacy. Among the requisitions and military movements referred to by the bull, no subject having any affinity to spiritual power can be detected.

The inculpatory sentence on the subject of matter of faith, announced in the Bull, refer to secret intentions, in which the Church has always hitherto abstained from pronouncing judgment.

Plots for the furtherance of impiety cannot be reasonably attributed to a Prince who has replaced the Catholic faith on its ancient altars.

The additional articles annexed to the Concordat have effected no essential infringement of its provisions; and those which were found most distasteful to the Church have remained inoperative. Favourable modification may also be justly expected.

Although the provision of the subordinate ministers is obviously insufficient, it is not less true that the Emperor has done much more for the clergy in general than he promised by the Concordat.

In political discussions, and the wars and invasions which result from them, on whatever side the right or the wrong may be, temporal sovereigns are answerable to him alone who gives and takes away crowns. When Pope Gregory IX. made known to St. Louis that he had excommunicated the Emperor Frederick, the King replied that he would send some trustworthy individual for the purpose of obtaining information of the state of the Emperor's religious faith; and that if he found his doctrine sound, he ought not to be molested by excommunication. The

Emperor replied that he was a Christian; that he was a Catholic; and that his belief was entire in all the articles of the orthodox faith. *Se esse verum Catholicum, Christianum, sanè de omnibus orthodoxæ fidei articulis sentientem.* (See the History of the Wars, the Schisms, and the Scandals, which were the consequences of the censures lavished on account of temporal interests, or at all events of temporal and spiritual combined.)

The Council of Trent does not appear to be a case in point. Its decree, appealed to by the bull, neither had, nor could have, reference to the disputes between Sovereigns, and the events resulting from them, when the faith and the discipline essential to the Church are not compromised by either. And will it be said that these two things rely for their most important basis on the temporal sovereignty of the Popes?

When under Louis XIV. and Louis XV. Avignon was occupied by French troops, the Popes abstained from excommunication. Pius VI. who displayed so just a severity against the civil constitution of the clergy, because it was in hostility to the essential discipline of the Church, did not pronounce excommunication against the despoilers of the Gallican Church. (See Art. XIII. of the Concordat of 1801.)

Examples of the wisdom of antiquity in the employment of such public censures.—The Church always considered that its functions were given for the purposes of edification, and not of destruction. She especially resorted to a praiseworthy circumspection, where the conduct of Kings and Emperors was concerned, and even such individuals as merely possessed a great influence over the people. (See the History of the Eight First Ages of the Church.)

The bulls of Boniface VIII. against Philippe le Bel, of Julius II. against Louis XII., of Sextus V. against Henry IV., have never possessed any weight or effect in France, because the bishops of France have refused to recognise them, and to publish them. For the same reason, the bull *in Cœna Domini*, so long and so solemnly published at Rome, has always been regarded among us a dead letter. If the bull of the last 10th of June had been addressed to the bishops of France, we apprehend that they would have declared it contrary to the discipline of the Gallican Church, to the authority of the Sovereign, and calculated, without such an intention on the part of the Pope, to disturb public tranquillity.

Conclusion of the Reply of the Bishops.

We have demonstrated, by examples drawn from antiquity, that the Church has always avoided a recourse to the employment of censures against Sovereigns, on account of the fatal consequences which they may produce to religion. Happily for us, we have nothing similar to dread at this point of time. If we are profoundly afflicted at the temporary interruption of our communications with the Sovereign Pontiff, we are not alarmed for the future. The public declaration so often reiterated by his Majesty, that he would never break the link of union between the two churches, revives our confidence. We know, that if blind impulse scatters

destruction, according to the dictates of its caprices and its passions; strength, when combined with wisdom, recognises the bounds which ought to be respected, and which ought never to be passed. The faith, the organization of the Church, all the essential points of its discipline, will sustain no infringement. The sacred and indissoluble bonds of Catholic subordination will continue to unite the flock and the shepherds to the chief pastor, who must be considered as the common father of the whole. Finally, the Gallican Church, which has been distinguished in all ages by the purity of its doctrine, by its zeal for Catholic unity, by its filial respect and attachment for the successor of St. Peter, and for the Church of Rome, the mother and mistress of all other churches, will sedulously cherish these feelings, and will always be the first to give proof of them.

Neither will we lose sight of this feeling, while following the track of our predecessors assembled in 1510, with the deputies of the chapters and the universities of the kingdom. Conformably to their example, we borrow, though in a different cause, the language of our fathers assembled at Chartres in 1591, on the subject of the admonitory letters of Pope Gregory XIV., "Without any diminution of the respect and honour due to his Holiness; and after having conferred and maturely deliberated on the subject of the bull, we assert that we discover, resting on the authority of the holy decrees, canonical institutions, and examples of the holy fathers, of which antiquity is replete, rights and privileges appertaining to the Gallican Church, of which our episcopal predecessors have always availed themselves, under such circumstances, in consequence of the infinite inconveniences which would result to the prejudice and ruin of our holy religion.

"That the censures and excommunications conveyed in the aforesaid bull are null and void, in form as well as matter, and that they cannot be considered binding or obligatory on conscience:—reserving to ourselves the right of representing to his Holiness the justice of our cause and pious intentions, and to satisfy the mind of his Holiness, from whom we may confidently expect the same answer that Pope Alexander made, when writing these words to the archbishop of Ravenna; "we will patiently submit, even if you should not obey a dictate suggested to and impressed upon us by false persuasions."

This declaration is the most precise reply which we can make to the question proposed by his Majesty, on the subject of the bull of the 10th of June, 1809: for an authentic declaration of the nullity of the excommunication appears to be the surest method of preventing the Popes from yielding to false persuasions, by which they might be induced to publish similar bulls in future.

That if the declaration of a small number of bishops should not be regarded as sufficient, there would still remain the resource of subjecting it to the consideration of an assembly of the French clergy, or even of a national council, to be therein confirmed. We have every reason to believe that such an assembly or council, after having laid down true principles of action, and declared what is the real spirit of the Church, in its application of censures to Sovereigns, more particularly of the kings and emperors of the French, will declare the nullity of the bull, and prescribe and appeal to a general council, or to the Pope himself, better

informed, not only as concerns the bull of excommunication of the 10th of June, 1809, but all similar bulls which might be subsequently issued. These forms of appeal have been for a considerable time customary in France: they have always been so in the Church, although under different names, being regarded, under extraordinary emergencies, as a legitimate recourse to the superior authority of the universal Church. And the fact may be seen demonstrated throughout the whole course of ecclesiastical tradition, in the defence of the declaration of the French clergy, published by the great Bishop of Meaux.

While proving that the bull of the 10th of June, 1809, should be regarded as null and void, we have offered to his Majesty a sufficient guarantee against this decree, and any similar one which might emanate from the Court of Rome; and if in times of trouble and calamity the Popes should be induced to commit excesses of authority, equally adverse to Christian charity, and to the independence and honour of the throne, such excesses would carry their own remedy with them, and the bishops of France would neutralise their whole effect.

But the ancient and unvarying doctrine of the Gallican Church supplies a still more substantial guarantee; because it detaches sovereigns, in all that relates to the political order and to their temporal rights, not only from the jurisdiction of the Pope, but even from authority of the Church herself. We therefore recognise, and under existing circumstances we feel it our duty so to declare, in conformity with the celebrated assembly of the clergy in 1682, "that to St. Peter and his successors, who are the vicars of Jesus Christ and of the Church, God has given authority in all spiritual matters, and such as appertain to salvation; but not in civil and temporal matters. Our Lord having said, "Give unto Cæsar the things that belong to Cæsar, and unto God the things that belong to God." It is God himself who has ordained the powers that exist; consequently, those who resist such powers, resist the order of things which God has established. Therefore kings and princes, in all that concerns temporal acts, are not subjected by divine ordinance to any ecclesiastical power: they cannot be disinherited by the authority of the keys of the Church, neither directly nor indirectly; and their subjects can neither be absolved from the faith and obedience which they owe to them, nor from the oath of fidelity which they have sworn to them; and hence this doctrine ought to be adhered to as necessary to public utility, as not less useful to the Church than to the empire, and as entirely conformable to the word of God, to the traditions of the holy fathers, and to the examples of the saints."

QUESTIONS

ADDRESSED TO THE SECOND COMMISSION OF INQUIRY, WITH THE ANSWERS.

First Question.—All communication between the Pope and the subjects of the Emperor being interrupted for the present, to whom must application be made, for the purpose of obtaining the dispensations granted by the Holy See?

REPLY OF THE BISHOPS.

Honored by the confidence of the Sovereign who called us together, in order to lay before him the mode of proceeding most conformable to the councils and usages of the Church, we will only consult, in our replies, the impulse of our love for religion, our zeal for the interests of the people, of which we are the chief pastors, and our devotion to the Emperor.

The frankness and sacred veracity prescribed to us by the functions of our ministry, do not permit us to disguise the profound affliction with which we have learned that all communication between the Pope and the subjects of the Emperor has just been suspended.

In the character of faithful and respectful servants, we shall nevertheless take the liberty of stating to his Majesty, that the Holy See being the strongest tie,—indeed, a tie which is indispensable to the ecclesiastical unity, of which it is the centre,—we can only foresee days of mourning and affliction for the Church, if the communications and relation remain too long suspended between the faithful and the common father which God has given them, in the person of our common father, his Holiness the Pope.

We will entreat him to have the condescension to listen to what the illustrious Marca announced before our time, that "conformably to our sentiments, and those of all French Catholics, the first and principal foundation of ecclesiastical liberty is the principle that the supremacy of the Apostolic See should always be admitted."*

While holding this language, which our fathers in the faith have transmitted to us, we only demonstrate with stronger effect our attachment to the doctrine contained in the declaration of 1682; and we take pleasure in persuading ourselves, in the midst of our religious solicitudes on the subject of the preservation of the bonds which unite France to the centre of Catholic unity, that we may place full confidence in the promise which his Majesty has condescended to make to us, of maintaining that declaration in its full integrity both as concerns the supremacy of divine ordination appertaining to the Holy See, and as regards the canonical rules according to which it ought to be exercised.

Nor can we refrain from saying to his Majesty, that in attentively considering the circumstances of the present time, we are induced to apply to them what the prophetic genius of Bossuet enabled him to see in the distant vista of the future. "The doctrine of the declaration," said that great bishop, "wonderfully raises the dignity and the true authority of the Catholic Church and the sovereign Pontiff. And the

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* De Concord. liv. i. ch. 11. No. 2.

time may come when good subjects may consider it indispensable to themselves, the Church, and the apostolic Holy See."*

It is thus, as the bishops of the assembly of 1682 wrote to their colleagues, that, without having overstepped the bounds prescribed by our fathers, and announcing the doctrine of the four articles as useful and true, it will be found that these same articles will become, by a happy concurrence, invariable canons for the Gallican Church, which the members of the true flock will receive with respect. "Sic eveniet ut quos ad vos mittimus doctrinæ nostræ articuli, fidelibus venerandi, et nunquam intermorituri ecclesiæ Gallicanæ canones evadant."†

But the more we are persuaded of these truths, the more we are affected by the resolution with which his Majesty has interrupted all communication between his Majesty's subjects and the Pope. We repeat, in the words of St. Bernard, whom Bossuet calls the *Angel of Peace*, "that there is nothing more requisite at the present time than to assemble the bishops:" and we add, in imitation of the holy abbot, in the respectful letter which he addressed to one of our kings, "that if any thing offensive to his Majesty has emanated from the Apostolical authority, his faithful subjects composing such an assembly will labour to get it mitigated or revoked, as far as may be necessary, for the honour and dignity of the throne."‡

Actuated by the same spirit, it is for the purpose of directly replying to the first question proposed to us by his Majesty, that we consider it our duty to apply to the right of *veto*, which the Pope is possessed of, what the learned Thomasin said of the exercise of some other prerogatives of the Holy See. "This ulterior right has not been the same at all periods, and has not had the same extent in all places; and although it cannot be said that these powers, which have not been asserted till after the lapse of several centuries, are *jure divino*, it cannot be denied that they are extremely convenient to the supremacy of the Pope," § whom the great Bishop of Meaux, in his *defence* of the *declaration*, calls the *principal executor and interpreter* of the sacred canons throughout the whole universe.

It is chiefly by virtue of this venerable title of principal executor and interpreter of the holy canons, that a universal rule of order has been established, by which the ultimate right of certain dispensations has been on all hands allowed to the Holy See in the Western church; and these rights, which have been established in conformity to sage maxims, have become a common law, whence it is not lawful to deviate, unless by pleading reasons of the greatest importance. Such more especially is the claim of dispensations relative to the order and general discipline of the clergy, relative to the age requisite for episcopacy, and the superior ranks of the Church, to the translation of bishops and others of the like class.

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* Déf. de la Décl. t. II. p. 407.

† Ep. Conventus Eccl. Gall. ad univers. Eccl. Gall. Præsules, 1682.

‡ Ep. S. Bern. ad Lud. Reg. Francorum, cclv.

§ Anc. et Nouv. Disc. de l'Egl. tom. I. liv. i. ch. 6.

Other privileges of minor importance have been successively introduced, although they refer to the wants and daily habits of the faitbful, such as those of certain absolutions, dispensations of marriage, &c.: others, again, which the indulgence of the Church authorises, and which a kind of necessity, more or less pressing, often prescribes. Since these privileges are not attached *jure divino* to the supremacy of the Holy See, it follows that the bishops in their respective dioceses, and by virtue of their episcopal jurisdiction, possess by inherent right the power of granting to the members of the true Church the dispensations and absolutions which relate to it. Father Thomasin established the same principle while designating as inalienable the jurisdiction appertaining to the bishops for the concession of these species of dispensations and absolutions: "Incerta et concreta quodammodo episcopali jurisdictioni."*

This power is the natural offspring of that which the apostle St. Paul declares they received from the Holy Ghost for the purpose of governing the Church, and consequently of providing for the spiritual wants of the flocks intrusted to their pastoral solicitude. They exercised it during the early ages, in the councils as well as out of them; and we know of no single regulation of the universal Church, not a single canon of the general councils, not even a single decree of the Holy See, which has deprived them of it.

The bishops themselves often favoured the recourse to Rome, in sending there the most considerable of the absolutions and dispensations; whether they found it more difficult than the Holy See to resist the solicitations of men in power, whether they found the discipline might be relaxed, and the law even abrogated by the multitude of dispensations, or whether they considered a recourse to the Pope as the only means of preserving a sort of uniformity in this portion of church discipline; or whether, in fine, becoming daily more connected with the transactions of the Holy See, they found it difficult to abstain from paying homage to its pre-eminence, by reserving the most important affairs for its decision. The progress of these changes, age by age, and their causes, may be perused in the publication of the author already quoted on *L'Ancienne et Nouvelle Discipline de l'Eglise.*†

It would be attempting to disparage the truth of history did we not admit that a portion of these changes is due to the erroneous ideas of some Italian ecclesiastics, on the nature and rights of the episcopacy. They assert that individual bishops have no right to dispense with the laws of the universal Church; and this language would certainly be correct, if it meant no more than that individual bishops had no authority to abolish even in their dioceses a law received by the whole Church, or that their territory, being circumscribed by the ordinary exercise of their jurisdiction, the latter does not extend, like that of the Pope's, throughout the universal Church. But this language, taken in its general latitude, is obviously false, since

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* Disc. de l'Egl. tom. II. liv. iii. ch. 27.

† Tom. II. liv. iii. ch. 27.

the bishops have always, when the superior advantages of religion and the Church's flock required it, granted dispensation of many laws or canons of the universal Church—such as fasts, extra-mortifications, particular vows, and particular prohibitions of marriage.

The same writers have not shrunk from adding, that the bishops ordained by Jesus Christ, who were successors of the apostles, though invested with the plenitude of the sacerdotal office, were no more than simple delegates or vicars of the Pope, and that consequently the exercise of their powers was absolutely submitted to the sovereign will of the Pope. It is sufficient to have exposed, and there is no necessity to refute such principles, which the Holy See itself has never avowed, and which cannot be established except by means of obvious contradictions and insupportable paradoxes.

The radical power of the bishops for the granting of dispensations is, therefore, unassailable ; and the exclusive possession, whether of long or short duration, and whether more or less general, of the Holy See, rests on no positive law, nor on any canon of the Church, which has deprived individual bishops of the right.

The first ecclesiastical regulation on this subject is to be found in the Provincial Council of Tours, held in 1583. It prohibited the bishops of the see of Tours from granting dispensations of consanguinity and affinity, even in the 4th degree; and the Provincial Council of Toulouse, held seven years after, appears also to suppose that the right of granting them appertains exclusively to the Pope.

But these two are the only Councils which prescribe such regulations. The other provincial councils held in France, from the middle of the 16th, and during the course of the 17th century, at Aix, at Bruges, at Bordeaux, at Cambray, at Narbonne, at Rheims; the assembly of Melun, which, like them, was employed in the discussion of prohibitions of marriage, and the dispensations to which they are liable, took especial care not to trench on the imprescriptible right of the bishops, in order to augment, while circumscribing its exercise, the prerogatives of the Holy See.

It may, moreover, be added, that although the interdiction to the bishops of Tours by the regulation of 1563, is most accurate and unqualified, it is matter of fact, that several bishops of that metropolitan see, especially those of Nantes, Rennes, Angers, and Mans, grant dispensations of marriage with respect to several degrees, which the regulation of the Council expressly forbids them; a fact that proves the little authority which it preserves even in the province for which it was especially provided.

Although there are some of these regulations which do not in themselves possess more than a circumscribed authority, we may apply to them, as well as to the kind of prescriptive right on which the power of granting certain dispensations or absolutions in our dioceses is founded, what Yves de Chartres said in an affair of much higher, though different importance, to the Church.

"Customs and regulations which are not founded on the eternal law, and to which the honour and advantage of the Church have given birth, may be transitorily abandoned in conformity with motives as holy as those which caused their establish-

ment; and under such circumstances, this abandonment cannot be considered as dangerous prevarication contrary to rule; but rather as a laudable and salutary dispensation. 'Cùm ea quæ æternâ lege sancita non sunt, sed pro honestate et utilitate ecclesiæ instituta vel prohibita, pro eâdem occasione ad tempus remittuntur, pro quâ inventa sunt, non est institutionum damnosa prævaricatio, sed laudabilis et saluberrima dispensatio.' "*

This reasoning is especially true when the question concerns the trausitory renunciation of a privilege which is founded neither on divine nor even ecclesiastical law, and the temporary return to the exercise of a right inalienable in its nature, such as that which is inherent in the episcopal character, of granting the dispensations transferred by custom to the Holy See; and when powerful motives of public benefit, of the welfare of religion, and the spiritual wants of the Church, decide the bishops to resume, for a time, the exercise of the suspended right, then it is, that far from deserving to be accused of a dangerous prevarication against rule, their conduct, in this respect, is, according to the authority of Yves de Chartres, a laudable and salutary dispensation, which the good government and the wants of their dioceses prescribed.

The Gallican Church, for a considerable period, has been enabled to reduce these measures to practice. In the fifteenth century, a deplorable schism afflicted the Church; and the difficulty of deciding who was the legitimate Pope was equivalent to a species of impossibility, in having recourse to his authority, in order to obtain such dispensations or absolutions as the members of the Church might stand in need of. It was then that an assembly of the Clergy was convoked, which was regarded, in that period of confusion, says the wise and pious father Berthier, as the sovereign ecclesiastical tribunal of the nation. The bishops assembled in 1408, with the deputies of the chapters and the universities in the Sainte Chapelle at Paris, issued in October the famous regulation, known under the name of *Advisamenta Ecclesiæ Gallicanæ.* The second article ordains that the absolutions commonly reserved for the Pope's authority, and the dispensations for marriage and irregularities shall be given, *if it be possible,* by the penitentiary of the Roman Church, if not by the *ordinary,* or, in certain cases, by the provincial council.†

A similar resolution was adopted by the council of the Gallican Church, assembled in 1510 at Tours, under Louis XII. It was there decreed (Art. IV.), that the prelates and subjects of the King should conform themselves to the ancient common law: *Conclusum est per Concilium servandum esse jus commune antiquum.*

Coming down to modern times, we perceive a Pope, as wise as he was zealous for the maintenance of the discipline of the Church, considering the difficulty of having recourse to the Holy See as a motive for deviating from the sage reservation which assigned to the Pope the right of granting dispensations and absolutions. *Ultrò concedimus episcopis,* says Benedict XIV. *relaxandi facultatem modò facilè*

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* Ivo Carnut. Epistola, 238.

† Hist. de l'Egl. Gall. tom. xv. p. 266. et suiv.

adiri non possit prima sedes. Now if this great Pope granted to the bishops, of his own accord, the faculty of dispensation, when he foresaw impediments in the way of recurring to the Holy See, he would have inferred, with still juster right, that when imperious circumstances prevented such recourse, the bishops would be entitled to exert provisionally the faculty of dispensation, the custom of which could never remain suspended in the Church. The reason of this is, as the author of the *Traité des Dispenses* has well observed, "that the privilege ought to cease when the real welfare of the Christian Church required it; and that there would be neither prudence nor wisdom in wishing its subsistence under circumstances when it could not subsist without being prejudicial to those for whose advantage, doubtless, it was and must have been established."*

"Reserving the privilege of dispensation is odious," says the same theologian, "because it derogates from the right of the bishops;" and in his Traité du Mariage, he proves that such reservation, which could only be established for the welfare of the Church, would often become prejudicial to it, if it were incapable of suspension, when it was impossible, or simply inconvenient to recur to the Apostolic See. "Eo quod ad Apostolicam Sedem vel nullatenùs vel opportunè recurri non possit."†

To these authorities it would be no difficult matter to add those of M. d'Argentré, bishop of Tulle, in his *Explication des Sept Sacramens;* of De Pontas; of Dr. Bailly, author of *Théologie dogmatique à l'usage des séminaires;* and of the Conferences at Paris and Angers. Dr. Ducasse himself, who has laboured with so much zeal in favour of the exclusive right of the Pope to grant dispensations of marriage, owns that the privilege ceases in certain cases, and specifically in those of difficulty of reference; "Because," says he ‡ "the prerogative assigned to the Pope, and the powers granted to him by Jesus Christ, are for the sake of edification, and not of distinction."

In short, all the theologians and canonical writers, who enjoy any reputation, either in Italy or France, concur in the opinion, that whenever recourse to the Holy See becomes impossible, dangerous, or merely difficult, the prerogative is suspended during the entire period that the impossibility, the difficulty, or the danger of the communication lasts.

Hence we are enabled to reply to the first question of his Majesty, by saying, that when unhappy circumstances temporarily interrupt the communications between the Pope and the subjects of the Emperor, the members of the Church ought to address themselves to the diocesan bishops, in order to obtain those dispensations which they previously obtained from the Holy See.

But this reply, which it has been indispensable to generalise, because the question was proposed to us in general terms, requires itself an explanation, the

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* Tr. des Disp.; liv. i. c. 2.

† De Matrim. p. 340.

‡ Tr. de la Jur. Eccl. tom. i. ch. 10. § 4.

principle of which we have ourselves pointed out while distinguishing two sorts of dispensation ; the first relative to the general administration of the Church and its internal discipline ; the last referring to the particular wants of its members. It is to these last alone that our reply to his Majesty refers ; because there would be too great an inconvenience in leaving to the individual will of every bishop the exercise of a right to dispense with the laws which the Church has enacted for the sake of good order, and of a uniform system of government.

Second Question.—The second question with which his Majesty has honoured us, is as follows :—

"Should the Pope persevere in refusing ordination to the bishops nominated by the Emperor to the vacant sees, what are the legitimate measures by which canonical ordination can be conferred on them?"

In order to reply to this important question, it would appear expedient to refer to that which was last year submitted to us in the following terms :—

"The French government not having violated the Concordat; if, on the other hand, the Pope refuses to execute it, it is the intention of his Majesty to consider it as abrogated. In such an event, what steps will it be necessary to take for the welfare of religion?"

After a succinct exposition of the Catholic doctrine, as concerns the jurisdiction of the Church, we concluded our reply by the remark, that the council did not possess competent authority to point out the measures proper for supplying the Pope's intervention in the ordination of bishops: thus its opinion in this particular would be no more than that of a small number of prelates, uninvested with adequate power and character to represent the Church of France. Consequently, we said, it is our opinion, in so delicate a conjuncture, wherein it is essential not to deviate from the principles consecrated by religion, and to refrain from alarming tender consciences, that his Majesty cannot act more wisely, or more conformably to precedent, than by convoking a National Council, wherein the clergy of the empire might deliberate on the proposed question, and point out the measures proper to prevent the inconveniences resulting from the Pope's refusal of the pontifical bulls.

In 1688, on the occasion of a similar objection made by Pope Innocent XI. to the bishops nominated by Louis XIV. in 1681, the parliament of Paris, on the requisition of the Procureur-général, Harlay, issued a decree, purporting that the King should be supplicated to convoke the Provincial Councils, and even a National Council. This decree, says d'Hericourt, is conformable to what has been practised in France on like occasions. Examples are contained in the *Preuves des Libertés de l'Eglise Gallicane.*

His Majesty is of opinion, and has caused the same to be declared to us, that this answer does not completely satisfy the question, inasmuch as it does not determine whether the National Council possesses in itself the authority necessary for supplying the default of Apostolic Bulls ; or, whether it would be still necessary to recur to a superior authority.

Without wishing to anticipate or prejudge the decision of the Council which may be called to pronounce on a matter of such grave interest, the bishops point out the course which may be followed, and conclude their opinion by reflections which we shall here transcribe, because they include the principle of the reply to the question which is now proposed to us.

"Hitherto we have confined our reasoning," &c. [Here part of the continuation of the answer of the bishops to the fourth question is quoted verbatim from their words, page 238, to the bottom of the same page.]

Such is the opinion which we had the honour to submit to his Majesty in the month of January, 1810.

Since that period the Pope has continued to refuse the bulls, without alleging any canonical reason for his refusal. He has not yielded to the respectful applications and prayers addressed to him a year ago, in the name of the whole Church of France, by the bishops then assembled in Paris. The number of the dioceses which are without a head pastor is increasing in an alarming manner; and episcopacy will soon be extinguished in France, if some canonical means be not found to remedy the non-execution of the Concordat, and the persevering refusal to grant apostolic bulls.

Louis XIV. experienced the same difficulty on the part of the Popes Innocent XI. and Alexander VIII. While the misunderstanding between the two Courts lasted, that is to say, from 1681 to 1693, the bishops nominated by the King governed their dioceses by virtue of the authority they received from the chapter of the vacant church. We possess proofs of this circumstance with regard to some of the bishops, and specifically with regard to the celebrated Fléchier, nominated successively to the sees of Lavaur and Nismes; and the fair inference is, that it was the same with the others, with regard to whom there are no positive memorials extant. This measure, which, according to general belief, sprung from the advice of the oracle of the Gallican Church, the immortal Bossuet, and which was in perfect conformity with the principles of the hierarchy, supposed the existence of the rights assured to the Pope by the Concordat, and even contributed to their preservation; and although the privilege of royal nomination might appear compromised by this kind of accommodation of differences, Louis XIV. was not indisposed to yield the point. The Popes Innocent XI. and Alexander VIII. made no opposition to it, and Innocent XII. tacitly approved it, by granting ordination to the nominated bishops without imputing any offence to them for the part they had taken in administering their dioceses.

It is a principle recognised by the whole Church, and consecrated by the Council of Trent, that at the very instant when a bishop dies, the episcopal jurisdiction passes by plenary right to the Cathedral chapter; and it is an immemorial custom in the Church of France for the chapters to confer the powers of which they are the depositaries, during the vacancy of the see, on the ecclesiastic nominated by the king to the vacant bishopric. If there exist in Italy, or in any other country, a law or custom in contradistinction to this, that

law and custom possess no authority over the French Church, which has always maintained its right to be governed according to the ancient ordinance.

Under existing circumstances it is a most fortunate resource for the French Church that the nominated bishops should possess the power of canonically exercising in their dioceses the episcopal jurisdiction. Why has the Pope thought it necessary to attempt to deprive them of a right so legitimate, and the exertion of which could only be for the benefit of their flocks?

In his briefs to the chapters of Florence, of Paris, and Asti, the Pope declares as a general principle, that the chapters of the vacant churches cannot delegate their powers to the bishops nominated by the Emperor, and he forbids the latter to accept the powers which may be offered to them, and to interfere in the government of their churches.

We are aware that these briefs, which were no where attended to, can never prevail against our ancient discipline. In them we discover nothing more than lamentable proofs of the prejudices imparted to the Pope by men ignorant of our customs and the actual condition of the Church of France. That virtuous Pontiff, who has conferred so many proofs of paternal affection on our Church, would have been eager to adopt every measure of conciliation, had he not been deceived by delusive statements.

It is under these circumstances that his Majesty, after having declared to us that he will no longer allow the existence of the episcopacy in France to depend on the canonical institution of the Pope, who thus renders himself the master of the episcopal order, inquires what steps are requisite in order that the bishops may possess the weight of character necessary for the exercise of their episcopal functions. His Majesty refers the question to us in order that we may inform him of that which is most expedient to be done.

We will endeavor to show ourselves worthy of the confidence with which his Majesty has honoured us, by a frank and legal exposition of the views which our devotion to his Majesty's person, and our zeal for the cause of religion, suggest. These two sentiments reciprocally corroborate each other: and in the character of bishops and French citizens, we will never consent to separate the interests of the Church from those of the state.

By declaring that henceforth the existence of the episcopacy in France shall not depend on the canonical institution of the Pope, his Majesty abrogates the Concordat passed between Leo X. and Francis I., and renewed between his Majesty and our holy father the Pope.

This Concordat, in fact, imparts to the Pope too marked an advantage over our monarchs. By one of the clauses of the Concordat, the Prince forfeits the right of nomination if he fail to present to the Pope within a given time a subject duly qualified. In order that there should be a due equality of advantage between the high contracting parties, there should have been an equivalent obligation on the Pope to impart institution, or give a canonical reason for refusing it, within a given time; in default of which, the right should have been made to

devolve, without farther delay, to the provincial council appertaining to the vacant see.

By the addition of such a clause to the Concordat, it would be no longer in the power of Popes to prolong the vacancy of sees according to their caprice. *The Pope would no longer be the master of the episcopal order.* We should preserve all the advantages of the Concordat, without its inconveniences or dangers.

And since his Majesty permits us to state the measures which appear to us most expedient in order to secure for the future the full exercise of the episcopal jurisdiction, we will take the liberty of saying that of all possible measures the Concordat modified in this measure is the most simple, the most conformable to first principles, and the best calculated to conciliate all opinions, and re-assure tender consciences.

The change which we thus propose in the Concordat is of too important a character not to require the assent of both the contracting parties. The Emperor is entitled to demand it, in order that his nominations may not be frustrated by refusals, or by arbitrary procrastinations. The Pope ought to consent to it, in order to give the Emperor a guarantee against abuses so often repeated. We look confidently to the justice and wisdom of the holy Father, that he will not refuse his consent to so reasonable a proposal; but should he do so, his refusal would justify, in the eyes of the whole Church, the total abrogation of the Concordat, and recourse to some other means of conferring canonical institution.

It is our duty, however, not to conceal from his Majesty that in an affair of this nature, the success of which depends solely on persuasive methods, it is of less importance to know what a rigorous appeal to first principles may permit, than to consult and conciliate public opinion. However just may be the entire abrogation of the Concordat in consequence of the Pope's conduct, and however legitimate the re-establishment of the Pragmatic Sanction, or any other method of canonical institution, it is not our opinion that they ought to be recurred to, without due preparation of the public mind, without having fully convinced the members of the Church that no other resource remained for the purpose of instituting bishops to the Church of France; and that it was not till every means of conciliation had been tried and exhausted that so important a change in the constitution of the Church was resorted to.

Another consideration will not escape the sagacity of his Majesty. The troubles excited throughout the whole extent of France, on the occasion of the civil constitution of the clergy, are not forgotten. The Emperor, who alone was enabled to appease them, would scarcely permit new dissensions and a new schism to revive them. It is, therefore, indispensable that the Christian flock should not entertain a shadow of suspicion of the authenticity of the ordination imparted to the bishops by the new forms. It is indispensable that malevolence may not be enabled to borrow pretexts from religious misinterpretation in order to form a party in the state. Under so well-consolidated a government as that of his Majesty, we fear nothing

for the public weal. Seditions and civil war will have no opportunity of reviving; but it is notorious that religious differences are the source of an infinitude of private afflictions, and that should they have no other effect than that of relaxing the springs of religion, and of enfeebling its beneficial influence on public morals, nothing ought to be left undone to avert such consequences.

We are aware that it would be unjust and unreasonable to confound the re-establishment of the Pragmatic Sanction, or of any other measure adopted in conformity with the advice and authority of the French church, with a clerical constitution decreed by a purely secular authority, in opposition to the just remonstrances of the sovereign Pontiff, and of all the bishops of France. But we are also aware that the people will not be enabled to distinguish this difference, which refers to reasonings above their comprehension; and that they will probably see in the new measures substituted for the Concordat, the single circumstance of the defect of the Pope's sanction, which they have been accustomed to regard as indispensable.

It would be in vain to flatter ourselves with the hope of enlightening them by our instructions. Far from convincing them, we should expose ourselves to the risk of losing their confidence. They would consider us to be in opposition to the chief of the Church, and out of the pale of his communion. They would take different sides; some for the Pope, and some for us; and the greater part of the Christian community, not comprehending the precise limits of the pontifical authority, one party would deny the Pope the power which of right divine belongs to him in the government of the universal Church, while the other would abandon the bishops, whom they would regard as separated from the chief seat of Catholic unity. Schism would revive with all its train of disorders; and what remedy could be provided against it, as long as a division should exist between the Pope and his bishops?

Nor let it be supposed that we yield to vain terrors. We know the sentiments and dispositions of the people committed to our guidance. We remember the difficulties under which we laboured at the commencement of our episcopacy; and the address which it was necessary to employ in reconciling them to changes produced by circumstances, but against which their ancient habits revolted. We know that we only obtained their confidence, and that of their more immediate pastors, by introducing ourselves in the name of the Holy See. We also know, and it is our duty to make it known to his Majesty, that at the first rumour of the misunderstanding which has broken out between the two powers, a general inquietude has diffused itself; tender consciences have manifested alarm; and that the people, notwithstanding all our efforts to re-assure them, even now tremble at the thought of being replunged into the state of religious anarchy, from which his Majesty's wisdom has been enabled to withdraw them.

In many dioceses, a sect of pretendedly *pure Catholics* has been formed, who exercise a clandestine worship, presided over by priests who, eluding the supervision of the bishops, give the government no guarantee of their principles, and of the moral code which they teach. We are apprised that the sect, which

began to disperse, has acquired a new accesion of strength from circumstances; and doubtless it will be augmented by a multitude of well-intentioned but ignorant individuals, whom it will not be difficult to persuade that so important a change in the constitution of the Church, is the harbinger of a project to destroy the religion of their fathers.

Another class of men, still more dangerous, and especially in the provinces, are the remains of a faction too notorious for its excesses.

At all times ready to seize opportunities of sowing discord, and disturbing public order, they put on a show of ardent zeal for religion before the people. At the slightest change introduced into the forms of worship, they exclaim that all is lost: they delight in alarming the piety of the worthy villagers, in order to prejudice and render them hostile to government. It is on the part of men like these without religion, and in consequence of their treacherous insinuations, that we have experienced the strongest opposition to the suppression of particular fêtes. And who can foresee the effect of the new manœuvres which these eternal enemies of order and public tranquillity will set in motion, if they find the public mind prepared to receive the impressions of their malevolence?

What are the consequences which we mean to draw from these reflections? Shall it be said that things must remain as they are, and wait the pleasure of the sovereign Pontiff to grant the bulls of ordination to the nominated bishops?

Certainly not. Neither the good of the French Church, nor the dignity of the Emperor, permit it.

The jurisdiction delegated by the cathedral chapters to the nominated bishops can be considered in no other light than as a transitory expedient. Besides the government of the churches, the episcopacy possesses functions especially appertaining to it, and which the faithful flock have a right to claim. Bishops reduced to the character of mere capitulary administrators, could only fill a portion of the duties of the episcopacy. It is indispensable that the powers of the order should be united to the powers of the jurisdiction; it is requisite that every diocese should find in its own bosom the plenary authority of the episcopal administration.

We take the liberty of expressing the wish that it be manifested to his Holiness that the Concordat, already violated by his own act and deed, should be authentically abrogated by the Emperor, or that it should be only maintained with the addition of a clause, which would be adequate to guaranty the Emperor and France against those arbitrary refusals, which render the rights secured to his Majesty by the Concordat illusive. If the Emperor should deign to accept this accommodation, and if on his side the Pope should recognise the justice and inestimable advantages of it, the bulls so long expected would be immediately dispatched; peace and order would be re-established in the French Church without shock or violence; all that we could wish would be gained, and we should have no reason to fear the return of similar difficulties in future.

But if the Emperor should not consider it convenient to listen to this proposition, and if the Emperor should refuse to acquiesce in it, the Concordat becoming

inoperative as long as things remainded in this condition, what substitute can be found for it?

At this question the mind is naturally recalled to periods which preceded the Concordats; and the reply which first presents itself, is that it is expedient to re-establish, with respect to the ordination of bishops, the regulations of the Pragmatic Sanction, as prepared by the assembly of Bruges in 1438, in conformity with the decrees of the Council of Bâle.

However, the Pragmatic Sanction having been solemnly abolished by the publication of the Concordat, it cannot be renewed, unless the ecclesiastical authority be made to sanction its re-establishment. For, as we said last year, "in the midst of all the variations introduced into the discipline of the Church, relative to the institution of bishops, the principle of the necessity of an ecclesiastical institution has remained invariable. These various changes have always been made by the express or tacit assent of the Church, and it is under its authority that the elections have successively taken different forms, that the right of confirming the elected bishops has passed from the provincial councils, and from the metropolitans to the sovereign Pontiffs; and that the capitulary elections have been superseded by the nomination of the chief magistrates; and if it were ever necessary to adopt any other mode of institution, it would be necessary to begin by obtaining the sanction of the Church. We go farther; such approbation of the Church would be indispensable, even should it be found expedient to return to one of the methods adopted in preceding ages. A law which is abrogated is no longer a law; nor can it resume such a character except by means of the authority which has abrogated it. The Church would no longer be her own mistress; she would no longer possess the right of making laws and regulations for her internal organization, if it were competent for any other power to force her to resume the laws and regulations which she may have abolished."

The supreme authority of the Church resides in the œcumenic councils, and, in default of them, it regularly pertains to the Pope to decide on what the law terms *causæ majores*. But when the question concerns the discipline of a great church, when more especially the object is to provide for her preservation, if unhappy circumstances should prevent her supporting herself by the authority of the chief of the Church; no one, we apprehend, will be hardy enough to contest her right and power of abrogating, or at least of provisionally suspending, regulations which it has become impossible to observe, and to substitute others more conformable to her wants.

The French Church cannot dispense with the administration of the bishops. Should the Pope refuse, without canonical motives, to concur in their institution, what other resource can be open, but to recur to the ancient law, by which bulls of institution were not necessary?

It is by a species of final appeal, insensibly introduced during the middle ages, and created into a law with regard to France by the Concordat, that the Popes enjoy the right of confirming the bishops. This prerogative, as well as that of

dispensation, is certainly an absolute right. Now it is certain that an absolute right of this kind ceases, whenever there may be an impossibility of applying to the person, in favour of whom it has been made; and with still more reason when that impossibility arises from his own act and deed.

The rules of ecclesiastical discipline have only been established for the good of the Church. It is said in the Concordat of Leo X. and Francis I. that its object is the common and public advantage of France, "*Pro communi et publica regni tui utilitate.*" (chap. 2.) Now, if there existed no means of ordaining bishops, in case the Pope should refuse bulls of ordination without assigning canonical motives, this treaty, concluded for the advantage of France, would prove extremely prejudicial to her welfare.

Whensoever we have had occasion to complain of the conduct or the attempts of the Popes, we have invoked a return to the ancient law; and it is not only the kings and the parliaments which have appealed to it, but the clergy itself has recognised the necessity of such appeal under particular circumstances. We may adduce two celebrated examples of this; one in 1408, the other in 1510.

Charles VI., by the advice of the clergy, the princes, the barons, and the universities of the kingdom, decreed in 1407, that no obedience should be paid to Benedict XIII. one of the pretenders to the papacy, who had been recognised in France. In 1408, a council of the Gallican Church was held in Paris, in the Sainte Chapelle of the palace, for the purpose of deliberating on the manner in which the Church of France ought to govern herself during the subtraction of obedience. The resolutions of this assembly were published under the title of *Advisamenta super modo regiminis ecclesiæ Gallicanæ durante neutralitate, &c.*

While referring to the means of providing for the benefices, the assembly ordains that the elections and the *postulationes* should take place according to law, *ut jura volunt;* that the bishops should be confirmed and ordained by the metropolitan, the metropolitan by the primate, or even by the bishops of the province, if no recognised primate existed.

Louis XII. in 1510 convoked all the bishops of his kingdom in Tours, and proposed to them various questions relative to the misunderstanding which had arisen between him and Pope Julius II. To the third question, the Council replied, that in the case of a notorious hatred and unjust aggression of the Pope against France, the king might throw off his obedience; not, however, absolutely and entirely, *non tamen in totum et indistinctè*, but as far as the preservation and defence of his temporal rights demanded. This reply equally refers to the following question: Supposing the subtraction legitimately made, what ought the king and his subjects, the prelates, and all the ecclesiastics of the kingdom to do in such affairs, wherein it was customary to refer to the Holy See? It was decreed by the council, that it would be requisite to conform to the ancient common law, and to the Pragmatic Sanction of the kingdom, derived from the decrees of the holy Council of Bâle. "Conclusum est per Concilium servandum esse jus commune,

antiquum, et Pragmaticam Sanctionem regni, ex decretis sacro-sancti Concilii Basileensis desumptam."

To these two express testimonials of the Gallican Church, we may add that of the bishops deputed to the national assembly, as recorded in the "Exposition des principes sur la constitution civile du Clergé."

After having established as an incontestable axiom, that in the situation in which the French Church then found herself, it was necessary to sacrifice to necessity all that could be abandoned without changing the inviolable depository of the faith, they take occasion to insinuate, as a means of conciliation, the possibility of a return to ancient law, as concerned the institution of bishops. We will quote the words of the "Exposition."

"It is, doubtless, conformable to the ancient discipline of the Gallican Church, to refer the institution of bishops to the metropolitans and the oldest bishops of each metropolis.

"But it must be borne in mind that the metropolitans themselves derived their powers from the provincial councils.

"The bishops of each metropolis always assembled for the confirmation and consecration of the bishops of the provinces.

"The provincial councils imparted canonical institution by the voice of the metropolitans and the oldest bishops, and it was in default of the provincial councils that the metropolitans and most ancient bishops exercised their rights.

"If it be desired to re-establish the principles and customs of the Church in their pristine integrity, it would be necessary to convoke the provincial councils in order to restore to them their right of imparting canonical institution; and it would be no more than justice that they should be convoked and consulted concerning an essential part of their rights and privileges."

The bishops of the national assembly do not say that the intervention of the Pope is absolutely necessary in order to effect a return to the ancient discipline; they certainly would have laid claim to it, they would have judged it necessary, if it had been possible; but they knew that the national assembly would not have permitted such a recourse; and under that supposition, and because they could see no other means of preserving the Catholic religion in France, they refer to the re-establishment of ancient forms by means of the authority of the Gallican Church as assembled in provincial councils. On which we have to remark, that if in so important an affair they merely propose provincial councils, and not a national council, or a general assembly of the French clergy, it was because they had reason to presume that the Pope would not refuse his approbation of the decisions of the provincial councils.

The *Exposition des principes* is signed by all the bishops of France, and by foreign bishops, part of whose dioceses were comprehended in the French territory. Pope Pius VI. approved it by a brief, dated the 13th of April, 1791.

It is thus that necessity, which is the supreme law, supersedes all positive laws,

when, as St. Augustine says, "Great remedies must be sought for great disasters, when a whole people must be snatched from death." It was on the same principles that St. Cyprian justifies Pope Cornelius: he was accused of weakness; "he has yielded," said St. Cyprian, "to necessity, to that necessity of times and circumstances, which God permits, and which man cannot control."

In conformity with the reasonings and authorities we have thus adduced, we have no hesitation in saying, that in the extreme necessity under which the French Church now labours, without any fault being imputable to her, she is entitled, in concurrence with her natural protector, the sovereign, to provide of her own accord for her own preservation. In order to secure the perpetuation of the episcopacy, she may either invoke the re-establishment of the Pragmatic Sanction of Bruges, or adopt any other form of ordination which may not be contrary to the canons nor to the divine and imprescriptible authority of the Holy Catholic See: "*Salvâ etiam,*" as the Council of 1408, to which we have before referred, expressed itself, "*debitâ sanctæ Sedi Apostolicæ reverentiâ et domino Papæ.*"

But in an affair of so much importance, in which all the Christian community are concerned, it is expedient to banish all anxiety and all trouble of conscience from the popular mind, and to leave malecontents no pretext for exciting troubles; the will of the French Church cannot be manifested with too imposing a publicity.

The suffrage of a small number of bishops would go for nothing. There must be a deliberation held in common, and a solemn decision adopted according to the usual formalities of councils. It is in this manner that important matters have always been treated in the Church.

There is but one way by which the French Church can manifest its will and invest itself with due weight of authority. That is by a union of the votes of the episcopal body, either in a national council, to which all the bishops should be invited, or in an assembly of the clergy composed of a given number of bishops for each metropolitan see, named by their provincials, and having delegated authority from them.

His Majesty, in his wisdom, will consider the advantages or disadvantages of both forms of convocation.

The resolutions agreed to in the council or the assembly by a majority of votes, should then be submitted, conformably to ancient usage, to his Majesty.

The wish of the French Church would be fulfilled, if she could obtain the sanction of our holy father the Pope. It will be at all events a duty to solicit it in the most respectful form; and if it be refused, protest will be made that it is with the deepest sorrow that the Church of France finds itself under the necessity of breaking one of the links which bind her to the Holy See; that she will never deviate from the obedience and submission which is due to that see by all individual churches; that she ardently desires that some fortunate circumstances will permit her to return to that form of ordination which multiplies the channels of communication with the chief of the Church, and which she only quits at the present moment because she is forced to do so by the necessity of self-preservation. Such is the wish which we have the honour of laying at the foot of his Majesty's throne. We

flatter ourselves that he will recognise the language and the sentiments which he was entitled to expect from the ministers of a religion, which places among the foremost of its precepts love of order, respect for the laws, and fidelity to the sovereign.

It is our conviction, also, that his Majesty will find in our principles, and in the measures which we take the liberty of recommending, an adequate guarantee against any future attempt of the Popes to prejudice the rights of the throne.

The readiness with which all the clergy of his empire subscribed its declaration of 1682, has already convinced his Majesty that the superannuated pretensions of Gregory VII., should it be desired to revive them, would encounter from the whole Church of France a unanimous and insurmountable resistance. And as to the arbitrary refusal of bulls of ordination, that abuse need no longer be dreaded, whether it be determined to add the suggested change to the Concordat, or whether the Church of France adopt another mode of conferring canonical institution on her bishops.

We will conclude this report in the same words as those with which the bishops assembled by Louis XII. in 1510, concluded their session :—"It appears to the Council," said they, "that nothing should be done till the Gallican Church send deputies to Pope Julius, in order to imbue him with the sentiments and admonitions of fraternal charity, and recall him to pacific views."

If this deference was thought due to Pope Julius II., an ambitious pontiff, an implacable enemy of France, and even in arms against her, how much more is it due to Pius VII.? The goodness of his intentions is generally admitted. All that he requires is to be enlightened as to the real state of things; and we are persuaded that he will not refuse the remonstrances and entreaties of the whole Church of France, if they were conveyed to him by some bishops especially deputed by his Majesty to confer with him personally.

This proceeding, which is moreover so conformable to the maxims and spirit of the gospel, becomes a more vital duty to the bishops, whom the public would never forgive for having expressed themselves with so much freedom on the subject of the conduct of their chief, unless it should be shown that they resorted to every possible means of softening the rigour of his resolution, and enlightening his upright mind.

All difficulties would vanish, should this deputation have the success which we fondly hope. But if, contrary to all expectation, this last effort should be useless, the people, who regard our deliberations with an anxious eye, would be satisfied that we took care to omit nothing which the profound respect due from all bishops to the head of the universal Church imperiously exacts from us.

Their confidence, and the authority of our functions would not be impaired, and they would demonstrate less repugnance to a new order of things, which paramount circumstances, and the necessity of providing for their spiritual wants, should compel us to adopt.

END OF PART I.

PART II.

MEMOIRS

OF

THE DUKE OF ROVIGO.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

Remarkable coincidence of date—The doors of my apartments forced—General Lahorie—The sergeant—Colloquy with the troops—A drawn sword at my breast—General Guidal—My secretary.

WHILE our army was commencing its retreat, a scene occurred at Paris which might have been attended by disagreeable consequences. To describe correctly what passed is rendered the less difficult to me by the circumstance of my being almost the only person well-acquainted with the details. It is singular that this extraordinary affair happened on the 23rd of October, the very day on which our troops evacuated Moscow.

I have already said that at this time France was perfectly tranquil. In the reports which I daily addressed to the Emperor, no reason had occurred for inserting any thing of an unfavourable nature.

The couriers sent to the Emperor usually left Paris at six or seven in the morning. I was in the habit of making

up my dispatches in the morning; that is to say, of rising very early, and not going to rest again after sealing my packet. This morning of the 23rd of October was the only one during the whole period of the Emperor's absence on which I had occasion to depart from this practice. I employed part of the night in writing my letters; and when I went to bed, I desired that I should not be disturbed unless some business of importance rendered it necessary to call me.

I was in the habit of locking the doors of my apartments, particularly the doors of my official-room and my bed-room.

At seven in the morning I was awakened by a tumult in the apartments adjacent to that in which I slept. Being very much fatigued, I was trying to sleep in spite of the noise, when I heard the panels of the door of my office driven in and falling on the floor. The idea struck me that the house was on fire, and that as I had fastened my doors this breaking in was done on purpose to awaken me. I therefore rose hastily, and groped my way in the dark to the door of my bed-room, through which the noise seemed to come. On opening the door which led into my office, which was dark in consequence of the window-shutters being still fast, I saw no light except what was let in by the fractures in the principal door. Through these fractures I perceived a number of soldiers under arms, who not only filled my apartments, but also the whole court of the hotel. They were breaking down the parts of the doors which continued to be held together by the bolts and fastening. I opened the door of my office, and going to them, asked what they wanted.

My apartments were so crowded that I could see nobody but soldiers. Some one said, "Call the general;" and I soon descried coming towards me General Lahorie, formerly chief of the staff of the army of the Rhine, under General Moreau. Lahorie and I were comrades during the

first campaigns of the revolution. We were on terms of intimacy, and notwithstanding the difference of our political opinions, I still retained a friendship for him.

On accosting me he said, " You are arrested. You may be glad that you have fallen into my hands; at least no mischief shall befall you." I could not comprehend what this meant, and what I saw about me. Lahorie then said, " The Emperor was killed at Moscow on the 8th of October."—" Nonsense!" I replied; " I have a letter from him of that date. I can show it you." Lahorie, looking earnestly at me, observed, " Can that be—can it be possible?" He was in a state of nervous excitement, and there was a convulsed movement of his jaw, as if he had been attacked by tetanus. He only repeated—" that cannot be possible."

Finding that I could make nothing of Lahorie, I addressed myself to the troops, while he went to look for a sergeant with whom he had spoken on his way to my hotel: but this sergeant, who was a worthy man, had not entered with the men who followed Lahorie. He called him several times; but the sergeant had probably stopped in the court of the hotel, or on the quay where the corps was posted. Perceiving Lahorie so eager in seeking for this sergeant, I suspected that he was a hired assassin, more especially when I heard the general call—" Bring the sergeant whom I spoke to on the way here."

I now thought only of saving myself. While Lahorie was seeking the sergeant, I addressed the officer who had the command, and asked who he was. He answered, " I am captain-adjutant of the 10th cohort of the national-guards."—" Well," said I, " do those soldiers belong to your corps?"—" Yes, Sir," he replied. " Then," added I, turning to them, " you are not mutinous soldiers?" All the soldiers exclaimed, " No! no! we are with our officers. A general has brought us here."—" Do you know that general?" I asked. " No," was their answer. I then said, " What I see as-

tonishes me. I know the general, and I will tell you what situation he has drawn you into. He was one of General Moreau's aides-de-camp, and was confined in the prison of La Force, from which he ought not to have been liberated without my authority. He is a conspirator. Do you know me?" They all replied, "No."—"Do you know where you are?" They again replied, "No." One officer said, "I know you; you are the police minister."—"In that case," said I, "I order you immediately to arrest General Lahorie, who has brought you here."

The captain-adjutant who held me by the right arm, and another officer who held me by the left, appeared to me to be frank and undesigning men; and I was the more convinced that the whole of the soldiers were misled, when I remarked that they had no flints in their muskets. I said to the captain-adjutant, who wore the cross of the Legion of Honour, "My good Sir, you are playing a bold game here, and running a great risk. You are in a fair way of being shot in a quarter of an hour, if I am not. By that time the imperial guard will be mounted, and then woe to you." *

I owe it to his memory to say, that he was less moved by the apprehension of danger than by the fear of acting wrong, that is to say, committing a dishonourable action.

Perceiving that he wavered, I seized the moment to say to him, "If you are a man of honour, do not stain yourself with a crime, and do not prevent me from saving all of you. I only ask of you to unhand me." On saying this I raised my right arm to seize the hilt of his sword, which he was obliged to carry under his arm on account of the smallness of the apartment, which was quite filled with armed soldiers. He seemed disposed to yield; and I was on the point of getting possession of his sword when, his resolution failed

* The barracks of the guard were only about three hundred paces from my hotel.

him. Pushing my hand down, which he seized with force, he said to me in a severe tone, "No, you must go where I have been ordered to carry you."—"Well, then," replied I, "you are a lost man, and you will only have to blame yourself when this affair is ended."

On saying these words, I saw from the window in front of me General Lahorie hastily crossing the court of my hotel. He was coming from the street, and had with him a most atrocious-looking fellow, whom I took to be the sergeant he had been seeking. They both entered the apartment in which I was with a furious air. Lahorie stopped behind the soldiers, a circumstance from which I augured unfavourably; but his companion came towards me, hanging his head, and seeming unwilling to look up. He held in his hand a drawn sword, which he had taken from one of the officers; but, in advancing towards me, he struck violently against a piece of furniture near the door, and the blow was so painful, that he was obliged to stop and rub his leg. This accident disconcerted him, and damped his courage. He placed the point of his sword against my breast, and asked me whether I knew him. "No," said I, "I do not know you." He replied, "I am General Guidal, who was arrested by your orders at Marseilles, and brought to Paris."—"Ah!" said I, "I know that; but if my orders had been obeyed you would be now at Marseilles, whither I directed you to be sent back about a month ago." General Guidal looked as big as he could. I had no arms for my defence, but such as my presence of mind afforded. Observing that he was working himself up to a passion, I said, "What! are you come here to disgrace yourself by a cowardly assassination?" He replied with vehemence, "No, I will not kill you; but you must go with me to the senate."

"Well," said I, "let us go to the senate; but allow me to retire to dress myself first." He replied, "Oh no, your clothes will be brought to you." This in fact was done by

my servants, who, however, were not allowed to come near me. While I was dressing myself, which I did as slowly as I could, one of my secretaries, formerly an officer of chasseurs, and who had been informed of what was passing, came down into the midst of the crowd, to which he seemed disposed to expose himself rashly. I made a sign to him not to do any thing to make himself be arrested, and said to him in a loud voice, "Go and tell my neighbour not to be uneasy, that no harm has happened to me." He took the hint, and ran to M. Real, counsellor of state and head of the first ministerial department, who resided near me, close to the Rue des Saint-Pères. He and M. Real gave warning to the arch-chancellor and the minister for the war-department.

Lahorie and Guidal still detained me in my hotel with a corps of soldiers, which consisted of three companies of the 10th cohort. Finally, they determined to convey me to La Force; and Guidal took upon himself the task of conducting me to that prison.

CHAPTER II.

I am taken to La Force—Attempt to escape—M. Pasquier and M. Desmaretz—My imprisonment lasts only half an hour—General Lahorie in my office—He is arrested—The affair is seen only in a ridiculous light by the public of Paris—Considerations.

A POST belonging to the paid-guard of the city of Paris, which was stationed at my hotel, never interfered or took any notice of the disorder. This was singular enough, as it was placed there by the staff of the garrison as a guard of security.

An orderly gendarme, who attended in my office, was absent, having gone out to deliver my dispatches to the courier.

This man had no opportunity of doing either good or harm on the occasion; nevertheless, the war-minister procured him the cross of the Legion of Honour for the services he had performed. Whatever these services were, they certainly were not rendered to me. All that I have related occurred in less than an hour, during which period I was constantly held fast by both arms. I was of course in a situation in which I could use no weapon in my defence, if there had been any at my disposal.

Lahorie and Guidal sent for a cabriolet. I took my seat first, leaving to Guidal, whow as my conductor, the seat on my left; he sent on a detachment before the cabriolet, and we drove towards La Force. We proceeded along the Quay des Lunettes, and here the idea of escaping struck me. Having gently opened the door of the cabriolet, when we got near the Tour de l'Horloge, I leaped out, and ran towards the Palais de Justice, where there is always a number of people early in the morning. But I had not observed that the cabriolet was followed by a party of soldiers. They immediately ran after me, crying—"Stop! stop him!" In Paris, nothing more is necessary to make a man be seized. Accordingly, I was soon stopped. Guidal and the soldiers then came up, took me by the arms, and conveyed me on foot to La Force.

The keeper of the prison related to me what had taken place at six o'clock that morning at the gate of La Force, where Lahorie and Guidal had been confined.

This keeper, who was a very worthy man, requested me to say what he could do for me, and assured me that whatever might happen he would save me. He did what he could to hasten the departure of Guidal and the soldiers who had escorted me to the prison. During the half hour I was in custody, other detachments of the same corps arrived successively at La Force, with M. Pasquier, prefect of the police, and M. Desmaretz, head of the first section of my department; but they were brought no farther than the clerks'

office, because, as soon as the troops which filled the little street leading to La Force withdrew, my secretary and the secretary-general of the ministry arrived. They had given the alarm every where, and brought with them a carriage, in which I and the prefect of the police were conveyed to my hotel. Under the arcade of the Hotel-de-Ville, I met the battalion which arrested me.

These troops were going to the Hotel-de-Ville, in consequence of the orders they had received; and though I sat as far back as possible in the carriage, some of them recognised me: they, however, said nothing. I arrived at my hotel at the same time as a party of the imperial guard, which came there to ascertain whither I had been conveyed.

I found all the persons belonging to my department at their posts, and I was therefore in a condition to transact business. I had returned very quickly, so that I was enabled to make the battalion of the 10th cohort be overtaken at the Place de Grave by a detachment of the select gendarmerie, which had arrived first at my hotel; because these troops, being quartered at the arsenal, soon learned what was passing at La Force. Their attachment to me, as well as their sense of duty, induced them to mount without waiting for orders.

This detachment brought to me all the officers of the battalion. It may be easily imagined that they were in a great consternation.

I had barely been removed from my hotel, when all the clerks and officers of my department arrived. It was just upon the hour at which they commenced business. They found General Lahorie in possession of my office; and the sentinels at the gate of my hotel having said nothing about the violence which had been committed, they were quite astonished at what they saw, and knew not how to account for it.

Lahorie, before he thought of getting a cabriolet, had ordered my horses to be harnessed to one of my carriages to convey me to La Force. He afterwards used the carriage

himself to drive to the Hotel-de-Ville, whither he was directed by his instructions to repair after having arrested or killed me.

He had just returned when the clerks arrived; and they were soon joined by M. Laborde, first adjutant of the garrison, who came from General Hullin's quarters. He was already aware of what had taken place, as will be seen by the sequel. He made my servants arrest General Lahorie, whom they bound, and placed on one of the seats in the apartment in which the scene of the morning had passed. In this situation I found him when I got home.

Laborde proceeded from my hotel to La Force with my secretary-general, who brought him there to satisfy the troops in case they should have opposed my return. I sent him to the prefecture of the police to dismiss the troops which occupied it: these troops not only refused to allow M. Pasquier to take possession of his office, but arrested M. Laborde as soon as he presented himself. Their resistance, however, only lasted for a moment.

Paris was scarcely informed of Mallet's enterprise, when every thing was restored to its former state; and all the harm that resulted from it was the ridicule cast on the administration of the police, at the expense of which the public is always very willing to be amused. It afforded a fine opportunity to the Parisians to avenge themselves for all the little vexations of which they thought they had reason to complain; and the military administration, on its part, was not scrupulous in resorting to any means to rid itself of all share of reproach.

Having considered the affair coolly, I found no reason to doubt the correctness of my impression, that what had happened was preceded by no preparatory plans which had escaped me. I observed that others were every where on the scent to discover the traces of a conspiracy, and I let them go on in their own way; but as I was not disposed to yield any of the prerogatives of my office, in spite of every opposition, I made

all the persons, both civil and military, who had been arrested, either by my order or by order of the garrison-staff, be brought before me. I was resolved that all the examinations respecting this singular affair should take place in my presence.

I shall give a true and correct account of the investigation. Those who read it will see to what extent a state may be disturbed in a few hours by a bold conspirator who goes straight to his object, and how much a government is to be pitied when conflicting powers divide the authorities to whom the public administration is intrusted.

This question lay between the minister for the war-department (M. de Feltre) and me.

It is for others to judge which has most courageously stated the truth, or which has endeavoured to draw upon his colleague a reprimand which he dreaded for himself, though it was not deserved by either; for no one can protect himself against an armed force which may suddenly break into his house. The sovereign himself is at the mercy of the subaltern who commands the picket of the guard at the gate of his palace. Had this enterprise been the sequel of antecedent transactions, which the subsequent investigation could not have failed to disclose, I might have been blamed for not detecting them before the explosion took place, and that blame would probably have been unsparingly bestowed on me.

But the cleverest man in the world cannot look into a single head, and see what is planning there: at most he can only be expected to get at what is going on between two, and even there his scope for discovery is limited enough.

In like manner the war-minister was not responsible for the conduct of a regiment which left its barracks with a colonel at its head. He had therefore no reason to apprehend reproach, nor to seek by falsehood and adulation to mislead the judgment of the Emperor, who was in the heart of Russia when the affair occurred.

Had the war-minister reported the circumstances as they really happened, the Emperor would perhaps have been sooner led to reflect on the danger of having an army composed as his was, and more particularly of going to so great a distance from his capital.

CHAPTER III.

General Mallet—His connexion with Lahorie and Guidal—Why these two generals were in La Force—Mallet's plans—He draws up decrees and makes appointments—General Soulier—The Abbé Lafond—General Mallet escapes from the house in which he was confined.

General Mallet was a gentleman of Franche-Comté, descended from an ancient family. Before the revolution he had served in the musqueteers of the King's household. The part he took in the revolution was sincere, and he professed its principles with great fervour. He was from heart and soul a republican; and he had a head for conspiracies similar to those of which Greek and Roman history has transmitted to us the portraits.

He rose to the rank of general during the war of the revolution; and long before the Emperor ascended the throne, he had obtained a command in the interior. His mind was continually occupied with ideas of government, but he was always faithful to his political principles. It would be too long to relate here the details of a project, nearly similar to the one in question, which he wished to carry into execution while the Emperor was in Prussia in 1807. His scheme was then called insane; but, nevertheless, the minister for the police thought it his duty to arrest him. After a long confinement in one of the jails, he was transferred to what is in Paris called a Maison de Santé. In that kind of lock-up

house, or prison-hospital, I found him on my appointment to the ministry, and in it I left him. The house is the last on the left in the Fauxbourg Saint-Antoine, near the Barrier of the Throne.

Mallet had long been the comrade of Lahorie in the army of the Rhine, and learned that he was at La Force through other prisoners who had been removed to the same Maison de Santé in which he was placed. He also knew that Guidal was in La Force: with that general he had been acquainted in the time of the Directory, having met him at the house of the Director Barras, who employed him on particular services. But before proceeding farther with Mallet, I ought to tell by what fatality these two men were still in La Force, from which they ought to have been removed more than a fortnight before, in pursuance of orders which I had given for that purpose.

Guidal had been arrested at Marseilles for an affair of jacobinism, and brought to Paris for examination. This was done in consequence of the representations of the magistracy of the department of the Var, where tranquillity had been so far menaced that the prefect found it necessary to resort to extraordinary measures. While Guidal was in Paris, inquiries into another affair which occurred at Marseilles led to the discovery of a spy system, which had been established by Frenchmen at a former period on the coast of Provence, for the benefit of the English admiral who cruised before Toulon. Guidal was accused of having visited the English fleet, and of having sent his son on board of it. This espionage was carried on for a number of years, without any thing occurring to excite a suspicion of its existence. In consequence of what transpired on the examination of the persons arrested on this charge, application was made for the reconveyance of Guidal to Marseilles, in order to his being tried there; and a fortnight had elapsed since I made the necessary arrangements with the gendarmerie for his removal. The execution

of my order was delayed; and consequently Guidal was still in the prison of La Force on the 23rd of October.

It was the same with respect to Lahorie. Since Moreau's trial he had concealed himself in France. The Emperor had frequently repeated the order for his departure, but M. Fouché allowed him to remain at Paris. Lahorie was a native of Brittany, and easily found protectors. The Emperor ordered me to take measures to send him off to America, and as a preliminary step to arrest him. He was arrested accordingly. I lost no time in preparing for his departure; and he was to have been embarked at Nantz on board a vessel bound for the United States. More than a fortnight before I had signed the papers necessary to authorise his removal to that port; but he remained in La Force like Guidal, and in consequence of the same negligence.

Mallet, whose mind was always occupied with his scheme for changing the government, thought he could not have a better opportunity for trying it than the present. The remote situation of the Emperor and the armies seemed to smooth the difficulties which environed an enterprise so hazardous; and the success of which so materially depended on a supposition that could not be soon enough contradicted to destroy the credulity which was the leading principle of his plan.

After meditating on the various means of which he might avail himself for the execution of his project, he fixed on the following:—He supposed the Emperor killed under the walls of Moscow on the 8th of October; he could not take any other day without incurring the risk of being contradicted by the arrival of the regular courier. The Emperor being dead, he concluded that the senate ought to be invested with the supreme authority; and he therefore resolved to address himself in the name of that body to the nation and the army. In a proclamation to the soldiers he deplored the death of the Emperor; in another, after announcing the abolition of the imperial system and the restoration of the re-

public, he indicated the manner in which the government was to be reconstructed, described the branches into which public authority was to be divided, and named the directors. Attached to the different documents, there appeared the signatures of several senators whose names he recollected, but with whom he had ceased to have any intercourse for a great number of years. These signatures were all written by Mallet; and he drew up a decree in the name of the senate, and signed by the same senators, appointing himself governor of Paris, and commander of the troops of the first military division. He also drew up other decrees in the same form, which purported to promote to higher ranks all the military officers he intended to make instruments in the execution of his enterprise.

General Hullin had at this time the command in Paris, and Adjutant-commandant Doucet was the chief of his staff. Mallet, by one of his decrees, continued Doucet as chief of the staff, raised him to the rank of brigadier-general, and gave him an order for one hundred thousand francs on the public treasury, payable at sight.

Behind Mallet's Maison de Santé were the barracks, which the 10th cohort of the national-guard occupied, and which also served as a depôt for the 32nd regiment of the line.

This 10th cohort was commanded by Colonel Soulier, one of the brave old officers of the army of Italy, but unfortunately as simple as he was brave. He had arrived but a few days before from Spain, and was appointed to the command of the 10th cohort.

Mallet was married, and his wife lived at a considerable distance from Paris. She came frequently to town to visit him, but never saw any reason to suspect that the planning of any extraordinary enterprise occupied his mind.

A Spanish priest, who was for some time confined in the same house as Mallet, having been set at liberty, took an apartment for himself in the Place-Royale; and there re-

mained with Mallet an abbé, named Lafond, who had been long under arrest on some charge connected with ecclesiastical affairs. Being in company with this abbé all day long, he found it necessary to confide in him. Two young men of Lafond's acquaintance were then in Paris, and he kept up intimate communications with them, but did not disclose the plan. One, a young corporal of the Paris-guard, was a native of the same part of the country as the abbé; the other, a young Vendean, was studying law at Paris. The latter being of an intriguing character, became a favourite with Mallet; who, on the day before that which he selected for the execution of his project, directed him to go to the Palais-Royal, and purchase a three-coloured scarf. At the same time he gave him a letter to his wife, in which he directed her to put his uniforms and his arms in his portmanteau, and also the uniform for an aide-de-camp, which had been left with her (probably by design), and to deliver the portmanteau and the key to the bearer.

In obedience to Mallet's orders, the young Vendean carried the portmanteau to the lodgings of the Spanish priest in the Place-Royale. Next day, the 22nd, Mallet invited the corporal and the student to dine with him, and the Abbé Lafond; and when the party broke up, he told the two young men to go to the Spanish priest's, and wait for him there.

At ten at night, after the doors were locked, Mallet and Lafond let themselves out by the window of their apartment, which was on the ground-floor, and adjacent to the garden. The wall at the end of the garden was not very high, and when they got over it they were in the street. Having accomplished this without creating the least alarm, they proceeded on foot to the Spanish priest's lodgings in the Place-Royale. Mallet sent for punch; and when he saw that the liquor began to operate on the heads of the young men, he spoke to them of his plan as a thing long ago agreed upon between him and the senate, but which was only to be ex-

ecuted in the case of the Emperor's death, and of that event he had but just been informed. In this way he imposed upon his two dupes, who knew him to be dissatisfied with the imperial government, but who never before had heard him hint at any thing of the kind he then proposed.

Mallet showed them the instructions which he said had been sent to him by the committee of the government established at the Luxemburg: his appointment as governor of Paris; a credit granted him to a considerable amount on the treasury; and, finally, an order for the immediate installation of new authorities in the place of those acting under the imperial government. All these documents were of his own fabrication. Without giving his auditors time for reflection, he opened his portmanteau, dressed himself in the uniform of a general-officer, made the young corporal put on the aide-de-camp's uniform, and decked out the young Vendean in the three-coloured scarf.

CHAPTER IV.

General Mallet repairs to Popincourt-barracks—Passes for General Lamotte—The 10th cohort turns out under arms—Mallet releases Lahorie and Guidal—The prefect of the police sends to warn me—Measures taken by General Mallet—Adjutant-general Doucet—Mallet is arrested—General Hullin.

At one o'clock in the morning Mallet left the Spanish priest's apartment, accompanied by only the three persons I have already named, and proceeded to Popincourt-barracks, where the 10th cohort was quartered. Strangers are not admitted into the barracks of Paris during night; Mallet therefore stated that he had particular business with the commanding officer. He was conducted to the unfortunate

Soulier, who was then living out of his quarters: he was sick, and was not able to rise to receive Mallet.

Mallet depended for the success of his enterprise entirely upon the trick he had to play here, and he certainly performed it dexterously. Without giving his name, he entered Soulier's bed-room: the colonel, after apologising for not getting up, asked the general what commands he had for him.

Mallet said, "I see you are not informed of what has happened; we have had the misfortune to lose the Emperor." On hearing this, Soulier burst into tears; and Mallet, who affected to participate in his grief, proceeded to say,—"The government is changed, and here is the order which General Mallet has this moment given me to deliver to you."

Soulier read the paper. It purported to be an order signed by General Mallet, requiring the colonel to muster the cohort under arms, to notify the events which had taken place, and to follow punctually whatever directions might be given by General Lamotte, who was the bearer of the order, and who had received instructions from the committee of the senate invested with the government.

Thus Mallet passed himself off to Soulier as General Lamotte. Soulier saluted the general, sent for the adjutant of his cohort, ordered him to call out the troops, and in the presence of the pretended General Lamotte, expressed his regret at not being able to accompany that officer to the barracks.

Mallet then proceeded in the character of Lamotte to the square of the barracks, where the troops were drawn up. He made the account of the Emperor's death, and the proclamations of the senate to the nation and the army, announcing the change of the government, be read to the cohort by the light of torches. During all this scene it never struck any individual to question the truth of the facts; but certainly

nothing could be more clear than the terms in which Mallet explained every thing.

The pretended General Lamotte ordered out the cohort, which was one thousand two hundred strong, without requiring the ten thousand reserve ball-cartridges which, according to the practice of the garrison of Paris, were kept in the colonel's quarters, or making the wooden flints be changed which the soldiers put in their muskets for exercise.

Mallet marched off at the head of the cohort, leaving only a single company in the barracks to accompany Soulier to the Hotel-de-Ville, where the colonel was ordered to wait for him, and to make arrangements for the reception of the government committee. He did not neglect to deliver to the colonel the commission by which he was raised to the rank of brigadier-general, accompanied by an order on the treasury for one hundred thousand francs.

The 23rd of October fell upon a Friday, which was parade-day for the garrison of Paris. Since the Emperor's absence the parade had always taken place every day in the Place Vendome.

It was necessary for the troops of the Fauxbourg Saint-Antoine to leave their quarters early, in order to reach the Place Vendome in time. The appearance of the 10th cohort marching on the Friday morning with arms and baggage, therefore, excited no surprise.

Mallet marched the cohort through the Rue Saint-Antoine to the gate of La Force. He ordered it to be opened, and made Guidal and Lahorie be brought to him. He then ordered the keeper to shut the gate, and to allow no other person to come out. Having embraced Lahorie and Guidal, he informed them of the Emperor's death, and what had taken place in consequence of that event. He then said, "There is no time to be lost. Here are your instructions; take this corps, and execute them. I need only half a com-

pany to go with me to take possession of the government of Paris, where I shall expect to hear from you. We shall meet afterwards at the Hotel-de-Ville."

Lahorie took the story of the Emperor's death for granted: he had been in the confidence of General Moreau, and knew all his projects; he also remembered the 18th Brumaire, in which he had acted a part. These ideas recurred to his mind, and aided by the appearance of Mallet in his embroidered uniform, and followed by a regular corps, left no room for suspicion. He read the orders, which seemed to come in an official form to him, and took the command of the cohort, leaving only fifty men with Mallet, who hastened to take possession of the prefecture of the police. Mallet found M. Pasquier, who was in the habit of rising early, already at his post. He arrested him, and installed the Vendean student and the Abbé Lafond in his office. Notwithstanding the situation in which the prefect of the police was placed, he found means to send one of his clerks to me to inform me of what was going on. This clerk, however, when he came to my hotel, merely insisted upon seeing me immediately, and said not a word more to any one. As he was known to the porter of the hotel, he might as a preliminary step have made the gate be shut. This he did not do; and he was informed of the order I had left, when I went to bed at five in the morning, that I was not to be called except for business of importance. As he came on foot, he was not long at my hotel before General Lahorie, who appeared to have followed close at his heels, and entered like a shot, as I have already related.

Lahorie dispatched General Guidal, who had accompanied him, to arrest the minister of war; but as the sergeant, who was to have assassinated me, had not kept his word, he ran after Guidal, whom he overtook in the Rue de Saints-Pères, and brought him back to my hotel with his detachment.

It was solely owing to this incident that the war-minister missed having an adventure similar to mine.

On parting with Lahorie at the gate of La Force, Mallet sent by soldiers of the 10th cohort packets to the commanding officers of two regiments of the Parisian paid-guard. These packets contained the same proclamations which had been read to the cohort when he called it out; and besides, minute instructions as to the duty required of the two regiments.

He ordered one regiment to close all the barriers of Paris, and to allow no person to pass through them. This was done; so that in all the neighbouring towns from which assistance, in case of need, might have been obtained, nothing was known of the transactions in Paris. He sent the other regiment to occupy the bank, the treasury, and different ministerial offices. At the treasury some resistance was made. The minister of that department was on the spot, and he employed the guard of his household in maintaining his authority. But in the whole of the two regiments of the Paris-guard not a single objection was started to the execution of Mallet's orders.

While Mallet was thus acting through the agency of others on different points, he proceeded himself along the Rue Saint-Honoré with the party of troops he had reserved for himself. He turned the corner of the street which leads to the Place Vendome. Here he detached from his troop an officer with twenty-five men, whom he ordered to form in order of battle in front of the office of the staff, which was the house in the angle of the Place Vendome on the left, and to allow no person to come out.

He gave the officer a packet to be delivered to Adjutant-general Doucet. The packet contained the documents already described; namely, the proclamation announcing the death of the Emperor, the decree of the senate, Mallet's ap-

pointment to the office of governor of Paris, and a brigadier-general's commission with an order for one hundred thousand francs to Doucet. To this packet were added instructions, in the form of a confidential letter, in which Mallet expressed great satisfaction at the connexion which their relative duties in the public service would now establish between them. He desired Doucet to transmit certain orders to the troops at Saint Denis, Saint-Germain, and Versailles, and also to those in Paris: of the last he only excepted the paid-guard, which he had already employed, and the 10th cohort, to which he had assigned the task of arresting the prefect, and the minister of the police, and also General Hullin. He added, that being aware of the intimate relation subsisting between him and General Hullin, he wished to relieve him from the disagreeable duty of arresting him, and would take that business on himself. At the same time, he warned Doucet to take care that no opposition was made to the arrest; and desired him to detain in front of his office, until farther orders, the picket commanded by the officer who was the bearer of the packet.

Adjutant-general Doucet was in bed when the officer arrived. As the officer refused to communicate with any third person, he was introduced into the bed-room of the adjutant-general, who, suddenly roused from his slumbers, was quite at a loss what to think of the dispatch presented to him. He read the documents several times, and asked the officer of the 10th cohort who brought them what had occurred in his barracks. The young man related all that he knew: he had seen his corps called out under arms; had followed Mallet to La Force; had seen Lahorie and Guidal brought out; and had continued on with the rest of the cohort to the Place Vendome, whence Mallet proceeded to General Hullin with whom he then was:—"for," added the officer, "I can see our detachment in front of General Hullin's quarters." And, in fact, it was easy to see the party from the window of M. Doucet's room.

It was impossible for Doucet to doubt the existence of an

enterprise, the details of which Mallet had communicated to him in his instructions. The project, it was true, might be called absurd, but it was acted upon. Of this he could not fail to be assured, both by what he saw, and by what the young officer, who was himself one of the agents, told him: nevertheless, he not only did not stir a step to counteract what was going on, but he completely lost his self-possession, and became alarmed about his responsibility. Mallet had ordered him to arrest M. Laborde, whose activity he doubtless dreaded. Doucet sent for M. Laborde, who had apartments in the same hotel. They were reading the papers together, when Mallet, returning from General Hullin's quarters, entered the room in which they were. He asked Doucet why Laborde was not under arrest, and ordered him to surrender himself. Laborde resisted; and some discussion arose, which terminated by his leaving the room, saying—"In order to place myself under arrest, I must go hence; for this is not my apartment." Going down stairs he observed the inspector-general of the police, who had come to the office of the garrison-staff in quest of information. The picket of the 10th cohort stationed at the door, in pursuance of the orders which had been given by Mallet, refused him admittance, but Laborde called from the stairs to let him pass. The soldiers, who knew Laborde's person, and had long been accustomed to obey him, readily complied. Laborde told the inspector-general what was going on, and conducted him to Doucet's apartment, where Mallet still was.

In a moment the scene changed. Mallet could no longer maintain his deception in the presence of the inspector, who, addressing him in a loud tone, said—"Monsieur Mallet, you had no authority to leave the house where you were detained without my permission:" then turning to Adjutant-general Doucet, he added—"There is something under all this: arrest him in the first place, while I go to the ministry, and get an explanation of the business." Mallet stood with his back

against the fire-place of the room. Finding that all was lost, he grasped a pistol which he had in his coat-pocket. The other three saw the motion he made reflected in the opposite glass, and they immediately seized him, and disarmed him.

What had happened at General Hullin's, whither Mallet had been before he came to Doucet, was learned after his arrest.

Mallet, who was accompanied by a captain of the 10th cohort, asked to speak to General Hullin in private.

The general came out of his official cabinet to receive him. Mallet said he had a disagreeable commission to execute, as he was ordered by the minister of the police to arrest him, and put the seals on his papers. General Hullin demanded to see the order; upon which Mallet said—" Let us go into your cabinet, and I will show it you." Hullin went first: Mallet, accompanied by the captain of the cohort, followed, with his hand on a pistol which was in his pocket. At the moment Hullin turned round to see the order, Mallet fired the pistol in his face, and he instantly fell. The general was not killed; but the ball, which entered by his cheek, remained in his head, and could not be extracted. Mallet then turned round and proceeded to Adjutant-general Doucet's, without the captain, who witnessed this transaction, and had become an accomplice in it, seeming to think it any way extraordinary.

CHAPTER V.

Misunderstanding between the minister of war and myself—I defend General Lamotte—Parties confronted—What might have happened—M. Frochot—Conduct of the minister of war—He sends an express to the Emperor—I send none—I am supposed to be ruiued—Opportunity of knowing my friends.

General Mallet being arrested, all was at an end. We could now proceed to those personal identifications which, at the close of the examinations, were necessary for placing the affair in a clear point of view. So many various opinions prevailed respecting the party, of which Mallet was said to be only the agent, that I felt a sort of pride in setting them right, being well convinced that it is always best to come at the truth, however disadvantageous it may be, and that nothing is so dangerous as to yield to illusion, or to be misled by passion. On this occasion some misunderstanding arose between the minister of war and myself. He suspected me of hostility to him, and to the army. He lent an ear to a multitude of stories to which he ought never to have listened, and which induced him to behave to me in the way in which he supposed me capable of behaving to him. But I did not retort this conduct upon him, and therefore he remained master of the field. He sought to make himself of consequence in this affair, and by attaching importance to improbabilities, he arrested indiscriminately various individuals whom he sought to implicate in Mallet's conspiracy. I, on the contrary, separated from the affair all who were not absolutely included in it.

The minister of war made it a great subject of complaint against me that I defended the innocence of General Lamotte, whom he had arrested on the ground that he was the

accomplice of Mallet, and that it was he who had taken the 10th cohort from its quarters.

He would not believe that Mallet had assumed the name and acted the part of Lamotte. I was obliged, after the declaration of Colonel Soulier, to bring into my closet the real General Lamotte, who was not known to the colonel. Soon after I caused General Mallet to be brought in, and he immediately recognised him as the individual who had come to him in the morning at his quarters, where he had presented himself under the name of General Lamotte.

After this proof of the indentity of General Mallet and General Lamotte, the minister of war asserted that there must have been some connivance between General Mallet and Colonel Soulier, who commanded the 10th cohort, as otherwise he would not have chosen that cohort in preference to any other troop.

These were two unfounded ideas. That there was no connivance between Mallet and Soulier is evident from the circumstance that the former assumed the name of Lamotte to introduce himself to the latter. Why should he have done this had there been a previous understanding between them?

As to Mallet's choice of the 10th cohort, he fixed upon that because it was so situated as to be beyond the observation of the authorities who were to be feared. The Fauxbourg Saint-Antoine was a considerable distance from the Place Vendome and the office of the minister of the war-department.

But if he had not taken the 10th cohort he could have found no other, except in the Rue Verte, or the Fauxbourg Saint Honoré ; that is to say, under the very eyes of the staff-officers of the garrison, who would have been alarmed before the cohort could have reached La Force, the prefecture of police, and the office of the minister.

In spite of the reasonableness of these observations they were not attended to, and passion predominated.

Through this madness of Mallet, fourteen unfortunate men were condemned to death by an extraordinary court-martial. They were guilty no doubt; but in justice it must be mentioned that they were most deeply distressed at the idea of being supposed capable of knowingly co-operating in the proceedings into which they were led by Mallet. They said that if the Emperor had been there they would not all have perished. They were right; and I believe that had the Emperor been in Paris all would have been pardoned, with the exception of Mallet, Lahorie, and Guidal. He never would have suffered an execution like that which took place.

I used my influence as far as possible to repel the idea that the senators had the least share in furnishing the documents which Mallet declared he had procured from them.

But for the accident through which he failed in arresting the minister of war, and which immediately restored me to my functions, General Mallet would have been master of many things in a few moments, and in a country which is extremely susceptible to the contagion of example. He would have got possession of the treasury, which was at that time very rich, the post and the telegraph, and there were a hundred cohorts of the national guards in France. He would have learned by the arrival of estafettes from the army, the melancholy situation in which the officers then were; and there would have been nothing to prevent him seizing the Emperor himself, if he arrived alone, or of marching to meet him if he came attended.

But Mallet could not have long sustained the character of a second Cromwell; for the deception would have been discovered, and France was tired of convulsions. Probably he would soon have been left unassisted to complete the execution of his project.

However, the danger which threatened the public tranquillity was great, and we were forced to confess, in spite of

ourselves, that there was a weak point in our situation where it was hitherto supposed to be most firmly established.

The most remarkable circumstance connected with this affair was the ease with which the troops were persuaded of the Emperor's death, while not one of their officers sought to ascertain the fact, or even to bestow a thought on his son. These same soldiers, without any ceremony, turned against individuals in power; and saw their general, the commandant of Paris, killed, without making any effort to defend him. These were painful reflections; and without any wish to cherish illusions, it was impossible not to think of the calamities which all this was calculated to bring about.

The prefect of the department of Paris was in the country when the colonel of the 10th cohort, Soulier, arrived at the Hotel de Ville. There he announced the death of the Emperor, and stated that he had come to take possession of the apartment selected for the government committee, which was coming to the Hotel de Ville.

A clerk of the prefecture immediately sent to the prefect. The messenger who was dispatched with the express met him in the Rue du Fauxbourg Saint-Antoine. He had just returned to town, and knew nothing of what had taken place. The messenger delivered the note from the clerk of the prefecture, who urged the prefect to return with the utmost dispatch. The note concluded with the words *fuit imperator*. The prefect hastened to the Hotel de Ville, which he found occupied by Soulier, who produced all the documents in virtue of which he was acting, and stated that the minister of the police, who had just gone, had recommended that speedy arrangements should be made for the reception of the government committee.

The prefect at first supposed that I was the person alluded to, and was at a loss to understand what was going on. He ordered his horses, intending to go to the arch-chancellor, and he said to the people about him:—"Do as these gentle-

men order you:" but before his carriage drew up the farce had ended. Colonel Soulier, and all who accompanied him, were arrested while executing the orders of Mallet. It was made a serious charge against the prefect of the Seine, that he should have said to the people "Do as these gentlemen order you," and the Emperor was prevailed on to dismiss him. The influence of the military authority was exerted against him, and he was disgraced. But, after all, what could the prefect do against a colonel and his troop, even supposing that his orders to his servants had been the reverse of what they were?

The prefect of the Seine was a man incapable of treason; and had he been in the way when the soldiers arrived, he certainly would not have admitted them until he had properly investigated the business. But who could have supposed that whole troops would have left their quarters, headed by their officers, without any orders from their generals, and above all, for the object they had in view?

The prefect of the Seine was universally commiserated: his friends did not desert him, and the Emperor expressed his regret for what had happened. Indeed the Emperor particularly esteemed him, and but for the obstinacy of the Duke de Feltre, I am certain that the prefect of the Seine would not have been dismissed. If he should read these Memoirs, I am happy to be enabled to inform him, that when conversing with me respecting this affair on board the Bellerophon, the Emperor spoke of him with a degree of interest bordering on friendship.

Thus ended the extraordinary enterprise of Mallet. Nothing could exceed the art and boldness with which it was managed. Every one was surprised at it, while they acknowledged its weakness; and though they were ashamed of it, it did not render them any the wiser. It excited great alarm in Paris, because people found that they were still on a volcano, while they had long fancied themselves on a rock.

The war-minister attempted to justify the troops, and in so doing, he called in question the vigilance of the minister of police. But even supposing the latter had had it in his power to trace a single thread of this conspiracy, which was known to one man only, nothing could excuse the troops for turning against the existing authority. Men of the most ordinary capacity are always expected to understand this part of their duty.

The minister for the war-department made a great noise on this occasion, and he sent the horse-guards to Saint Cloud, under pretence that Mallet's party wanted to carry off the Emperor's son, while Mallet and his companions were already under arrest. All that the war-minister did was useless, and he knew it; but he wanted to show his zeal, to ingratiate himself in public opinion, and to avert the storm which he saw gathering. He made a great parade when the danger was over, and in so doing he gained his end.

The details of the trial did not set his mind at ease, and he was not satisfied until he sent an officer of his staff to the Emperor. He took his judgment by surprise in this affair, and completely misled him. The Emperor afterwards discovered this; but he had pronounced his decision, and he did not wish to show that he had been deceived. However, the war-minister was no gainer in this business.

For my part, I sent no one to the Emperor. I did not wish to take his judgment by surprise, or to accuse any person whatever; and I even made up my mind to bear all that I foresaw he would write to me on the subject. He had often spoken to me sharply; but I had never been accustomed to receive a harsh letter from him. Accordingly, I calculated the day on which I might expect to receive from the Emperor a reply to the report of the event. On that day I made my secretary open all the letters which came from the Emperor, and I ordered him to give me only those which contained no expressions of ill-humour, and to throw

the reprimand, if one should be sent, into the fire. It arrived as I expected, and nothing was wanting but to have deserved it. However, I did not vex myself, because I knew all that had been done to influence the opinion of the Emperor. I always placed confidence in his judgment and goodness of heart, and I would not have run the chance of losing his favour for having failed in such a circumstance.

I suffered from the consequences of this affair. Many persons deserted me because they were persuaded I could not remain in place. They even went so far as to choose a successor for me. "Ah!" said the ladies, "they should watch what is going on in the barracks rather than in our boudoirs."

In all ages of the world the defeated party has invariably paid the penalty; but in this instance, had I been somewhat less conscientious than I was, I might have cleared myself at the expense of another.

This was a fine opportunity for revenging the discovery made in the offices of the war-department of the espionage of the Russian embassy; and it was not suffered to escape. Some months after I might have had a triumphant satisfaction, as will be seen in the course of these Memoirs; but I let the matter pass. I was pitied, for I had regained the good opinion of the public, and I had done no harm to any one; but, on the contrary, had been serviceable to many. People expressed regret for what had happened to me; but they believed, nevertheless, that the first courier from the Emperor would announce the nomination of my successor. They therefore behaved accordingly; and intrigues commenced for sharing my spoil. I pretended not to observe them, while I profited by the opportunity of knowing my friends.

CHAPTER VI.

The Russians will not listen to any proposition—Anxiety of the capital—Simultaneous retreat of the Russian and French armies at Mojaisk—The Emperor's departure—Considerations which determine it—His arrival in Paris—Audience of the ministers—Behaviour of the courtiers towards me—The Emperor forms a just opinion of Mallet's conspiracy—My credit is established—My friends come back to me.

DURING the end of October we supposed that the Emperor would pass the winter in Moscow; but we soon received bulletins announcing the retreat of the army, and the events which occasioned that retreat.

The Russians having sacrificed Moscow, would listen to no proposal for an armistice. They had a good position at Kalouga. Our communications could not possibly be maintained. The enemy's light-troops left nothing but burnt villages to ours. They were surrounding Moscow; and our army would have been enclosed there, in ignorance of all that was passing behind it, where there was still a force sufficient to form a powerful army.

Privation had caused disorder in the corps to which distributions could not be made. These and many other considerations determined the Emperor to retreat. He was very dissatisfied that our cavalry had not observed the track of the Russians. Had he known the course they took, he might have followed and dispersed them after the battle of the Moskowa, instead of proceeding to Moscow.

The whole population of Paris had provided themselves with maps of Russia, on which they were tracing with pins the places mentioned in the bulletins. All classes of society evinced the utmost eagerness to obtain intelligence of an army, in which every one had a brother, a son, or a friend.

The distance which the army had to march to find winter-quarters excited the most serious alarm; which, as the fatal twenty-ninth bulletin speedily showed, was but too well-founded.

The Emperor's arrival in Paris was a death-blow to public confidence. Gloomy forebodings having once commenced, they were carried on beyond all bounds; and the French army was regarded as an immense caravan of men frozen and starving, instead of that mass of brave cohorts, which had so long been the admiration of contemporaries, and had performed so many deeds of glory to adorn the page of history.

The public mind was in this state of restless anxiety, when intelligence was received of the arrival at Wilna of the wreck of our army. It had lost all its horses, and consequently all its artillery; and had returned to the Beresina, successively cut off and flanked by the corps of the Russian army, which had left Kalouga to intercept the road from Smolensko to Moscow. On reaching the Beresina, the left bank of the river was found to be occupied by the Russian army which had come from Moldavia after the treaty of Jassy. This unexpected circumstance destroyed the remaining hope of the wreck of our army. The Emperor could not understand why Prince Schwartzenberg and General Reynier had not secured him against the march of this Russian force. There was no alternative but to engage it; and fortune granted only a few moments for opening the passage of the Beresina before the arrival of the other Russian army, which was following the rear of the column.

On his departure from Moscow, the Emperor had foreseen all that the army must suffer in passing through a country which had already been ravaged by the successive marches of two such considerable armies. Thus, on quitting Moscow, he took the road to Kalouga, through a country which had not previously been occupied, and in which the army would have found subsistence.

But the Russians had got before him. He attacked and beat them, but could not put them to the rout. They retired on Malojaroslavetz. Unfortunately, the Emperor was not informed of this. He thought that he could not dislodge them from their position except by means of combinations, which he had not time to employ. He fell back on Mojaisk. The Russians returned to occupy the positions they had abandoned; and then our misfortunes commenced. The army at length reached the Beresina. The bridges of the Borisow were destroyed: the enemy was waiting for us on the opposite bank, and our destruction seemed inevitable. But the Emperor watched over the wreck of his army. Wittgenstein's corps was penetrated; and the places which seemed destined as the scenes of our defeat, witnessed the flight of those who might have conquered us. We crossed the fatal river; but cold, privation, and fatigue, continued their ravages. We had no alternative but to face the disasters which menaced us, and which the Emperor measured in their fullest extent. He knew the sentiments that were entertained for us in Germany, and the hopes which our reverses would revive. He resolved to anticipate them, and at least to ensure to himself the means of repressing them. Another consideration contributed to determine him. He had just learned the details of Mallet's affair; and in spite of the accounts he had received, all of which varied according to the opinions, the rivalry, or the ambition * of those by whom they were related, the truth had not escaped him. His excellent tact enabled him to see the affair in its true light, and to estimate the danger better than any one: not by what Mallet had done, but by what had not been done by those who possessed his confidence in the different departments of the government. Melancholy reflections arose in

* All who were candidates for the posts of minister and prefect of police wrote to induce the Emperor to make the changes they wished.

his mind, when he discovered that his system had not attained that degree of solidity which he thought he had imparted to it. This consideration contributed not a little to hasten his return to Paris, where he naturally supposed that the intelligence of the disaster of the army would spread alarm.

He arrived on the 19th of December, at eight in the evening; and the ministers were summoned to attend him at ten o'clock next morning.

I went to see M. Caulaincourt on the evening of the 19th. He informed me of the utter ruin of all at Moscow. He had just passed a fortnight in intimate communication with the Emperor, who, he said, had read over twenty times all the accounts he had received respecting the affair of the 23rd of October. M. Caulaincourt did not disguise from me, that though the Emperor set down a great deal to the account of animosity, yet he was nevertheless somewhat displeased with me. He thought my defence feeble; and he concluded that there was reason for its being so. I was not sorry to learn that the Emperor was a little out of humour; because by a clear and natural statement it was always easy to make him see the truth, and then people who had been calumniated stood higher in his good opinion than before. The Emperor had conversed with the aide-de-camp whom the Duke de Feltre had sent to him; and he returned home with the impression he had received from the account of the war-minister. Caulaincourt did his best to serve me; for which I am indebted to him.

Next day, the 20th of December, the Emperor's saloons were thronged at an early hour; but the persons who assembled there were not all equally satisfied.

The Emperor first received the arch-chancellor, and then the ministers one after another, according to their seniority in office; so that the grand-judge, and all the others, the minister of commerce excepted, preceded me.

Among all who were there, not one would have chosen to be in my place. They seemed as if they did not dare to speak to me, for fear of giving me pain. The Emperor did not detain any of the ministers long, except the Duke de Feltre, so that I was soon introduced. As I passed through the crowd which was collected round the door of the Emperor's saloon, every one fell back, as if to make way for a funeral procession. All thought I was bidding adieu to the court; and what tended to confirm this opinion was, that the Duke of Otranto had returned to Paris: the Emperor having recalled him from Aix, in Provence, where he resided. He was already looked upon as my successor. Some friends of my former prosperity did not fail to acquaint me with all that was said while I was with the Emperor.

My audience lasted nearly two hours; and the time was accurately calculated by observers, who were not all so well disposed towards me as the arch-chancellor, who remained in the saloon till I took my leave.

The Emperor asked me a thousand questions respecting the affairs of the interior previous to Mallet's conspiracy. I had none but good accounts to give him; of the truth of which he himself had an opportunity of judging on his journey from Mentz to Paris. He was therefore very well satisfied, especially as I said ill of nobody. It never seemed to be understood in France that the Emperor was always best pleased when he heard no complaints against any person whatever. When he had made all the inquiries he wished, he commenced the subject of Mallet. He spoke first; and from all he said, I sufficiently understood whence he had obtained his information. Some degree of malignity had been employed; for the facts pointed out to him were all well known. But pains had been taken to prejudice his judgment; and that object had been gained.

He said to me—"That you might be arrested by fifty men, I can very well understand: for your own sake, it

would have been well if you could have defended yourself. I am myself at the mercy of the officer who is on duty at my door. But I cannot understand how it happened that you were not aware that Mallet and the colonel of the cohort had been for some time in the habit of seeing each other, as well as Lahorie."

His notion of the affair was founded entirely upon the intelligence he had received from the military police. I pointed out the incorrectness of these statements, and acquainted him with the facts which I have already laid before the reader.

At first he would not believe what I told him; and he said, "Can any man in his senses tell me such a story as this?" I persisted in my statement; and he began to be convinced when I informed him that the colonel of the 10th cohort had been only a few days in Paris; that he had just returned from Barcelona, where he had distinguished himself, which had obtained for him the command of that cohort; and that not only he had not given cartridges to his men, but he had not made them put their flints in their muskets, which he would not have neglected if he had had any share in the plot. This had not been mentioned in the report of the military police.

The Emperor was still of opinion that General Lamotte had been concerned in Mallet's enterprise. He reflected on me for not having concurred with the minister of the war-department, who had arrested General Lamotte, and kept him still in prison. To this I replied, by the observations which I made a few pages farther back. The Emperor would not admit the justice of my opinion, until he had submitted it to the council, and he said, "If this be true, you have viewed the affair in its true light."

The war-minister had not spoken to him of Adjutant-general Doucet, who had tampered with Mallet, instead of hastening to the aid of General Hullin: on the contrary, he created him a general of brigade; which caused it to be said, that

Doucet could not fail to attain that rank, for Mallet had already given it to him.

The Emperor never spoke to me with greater kindness than on this occasion. He only regretted that I had not been able to defend myself. "It is a vexatious affair," he said; "but you are not to blame."

He also asked how it had happened that the conspirators got access to me without encountering any guards in my anti-chambers. One musket-shot, he said, would have put the whole troop to flight. This was true enough; but it was necessary first to have one's hands free. "Lahorie," said I, "took this precaution, because he knew I was not likely to allow myself to be seized without resistance.

"Finally," I observed, "I have a guard of eight or ten men only during the night. In the day-time they withdraw; and they were just gone when the three companies of the cohort arrived."

He said nothing about the guard at my door, seeing my office broken into, and suffering me to be arrested without making any resistance.

I saw that he was beginning to take a right view of the affair; and he dismissed me, desiring that I would send M. de Real to him that evening, as he wished to speak to him.

When I quitted the Emperor, it was curious to observe the eagerness with which the courtiers tried to read in my countenance whether they ought or ought not to speak to me. However, they augured favourably of an interview of such long duration; and from that evening (for it was between four and five o'clock before the Emperor dismissed me), the absurd reports, of which I had been the subject for the space of a month, were at an end. I subsequently had many good opportunities of punishing the authors of these stories; but I let them pass.

When I was restored to favour, my friends returned to me. I received them all, without cherishing ill-will towards any.

The Emperor appeared to me to be offended with M. Pasquier, the prefect of police. I took his part, and obtained for him the justice he deserved. This was no very difficult task, for M. Pasquier was a great favourite with the Emperor.

The Emperor held a council to deliberate on the affair of General Mallet. He ordered a report to be presented to him of all the circumstances of the case, and on this he formed an accurate opinion. He ordered the liberation of General Lamotte; but he dismissed the prefect of the Seine, in spite of all that I could say in his behalf; and finally, he disbanded the paid horse and foot guards of the city of Paris.

He ordered me to present to him in the same council a plan for organising a corps of gendarmerie for Paris, which was to be subordinate both to the civil and military authorities, so that there might be no reason to apprehend the bad use that either the one or the other might make of it.

On the same day, intelligence was received of the defence of the castle of Burgos, which had sustained several assaults from the English, without losing any of its works. In the garrison, by which it was defended, there was a detachment of the paid-guard of Paris. The war-minister proposed that the Emperor should reform out of this detachment the corps which had been disbanded in Paris. But the Emperor would not hear of this; and he directed me to draw up, without delay, the plan he had ordered.

CHAPTER VII.

Taxes—Resources—New army — National feeling—Deputations from the Departments—Murat retires to Naples — Defection of Prussia—Privy-council—Opinions expressed in it—Negotiations through the medium of Austria—M. de Bubna.

THE disastrous Russian campaign was the first fatal event with which France had been visited during the Emperor's reign. It was endured with courage, though it was much talked of; and every sacrifice was generously made for the necessity of reorganising the army.

At this period we began to experience the levying of taxes by illegal means; and some other measures, equally arbitrary, were also put in force; but the embarrassments of our situation at that moment rendered them necessary.

Our misfortunes were great, and the time for repairing them was short, so that it was requisite to proceed with the utmost promptitude.

It would be severe injustice to judge the Emperor by the two last years of his reign. They furnished arms to his enemies; but we must not imitate them. The events of these two last years were beyond human foresight, and they demanded remedies out of the regular course; and only those were adopted which could be most readily put in force. Had not arbitrary measures been resorted to, we should not have been enabled again to take the field as we did in the month of May following. None but the Emperor could have turned to such good account the resources he possessed, and created those he wanted.

All our convoys of arms and baggage had been left in the canals of Prussia and in the rivers of Poland, where they were frozen up.

The Emperor had to replace the whole of the artillery, with the trains. He had all the cavalry to remount, and half his infantry to renew.

Such a situation would have daunted any courage but his. However, when he had carefully read the returns and reports, which showed, as he said, what his situation was, he set to work, and in a very few weeks he had collected the materials of a new army.

The artillery was in the arsenals, so that all that remained to be done was to purchase horses and equip them.

A sufficient number was procured for the trains, and also for remounting the cavalry. The works for the supply of every thing connected with the military service were doubled; and in this department every thing still went on well.

The hundred cohorts of the national guard, together with all the troops who were in the depôts of the different regiments, were incorporated with the army. To these were added a levy of men; and thus an army was formed no less numerous than the first, with which, however, it was not to be compared, as far as regarded the vigour, and above all, the experience of the men.

The Emperor appointed to each of his new battalions old officers from the corps of the army; but as this operation had already been several times repeated, these officers were themselves nothing more than good privates: for the class from which picked men used to be taken was already exhausted.

The cavalry in particular was composed merely of boys mounted on horses, as raw and untrained as their riders. The marine proved of great assistance in this emergency; for it gave its corps of artillery, which was very numerous, and compensated over and above for the losses which had been sustained in that department. The marine, moreover, furnished a fine division of infantry. The national feeling was enthusiastic throughout France. The people of Piedmont

also distinguished themselves for the zeal with which they anticipated all that could be required of them.

Deputations arrived from all parts of France with assurances of loyalty and attachment to the Emperor. Amidst the misfortunes with which we were assailed, all seemed to derive consolation from the opportunity of evincing their zeal. All classes vied with each other in their exertions for the public service. Patriotic contributions were never more willingly made at any period of the revolution. The feeling pervaded all classes of society, and every corporation and profession supplied a certain number of horses and war-equipages.

While the Emperor was thus exerting himself in Paris, ruin awaited his affairs in the army.

The King of Naples had not only failed in rallying the army at Wilna, but he had evacuated that town, and brought back the army in confusion towards the Vistula. This completed our destruction in Russia. It was the month of January, and the cold was excessive. On reaching the Vistula, the King of Naples himself quitted the army to return to his own dominions, transferring the command to the Viceroy of Italy. The Emperor was very dissatisfied with this conduct; and it was well for the King of Naples that he did not pass through France, where he would certainly have met with a very unfavourable reception. He proceeded home by the way of Saxony, Bavaria, and the Tyrol.

The Russians dispatched hosts of cossacks in pursuit of our army. They crossed the rivers on the ice, so that we could not take up a position any where. We consequently fell back on Posen, and afterwards on the Oder and the Elbe; but we could not guard even the latter river.

The Prussian contingent, under the command of General Yorck, was on the left of Marshal Macdonald's corps. The Prussian general made a treaty in favour of his corps with the Russian general who was pursuing him. He concluded

an armistice, by which his troops were neutralised; thus exposing the rest of the army-corps to certain destruction. By this means he indirectly compromised the King of Prussia, his master, who was in his capital in the midst of our army.

At the time of this first defection, we felt the full weight of the ingratitude of Marshal Bernadotte, who might, by attacking Finland, have detained the corps which he had allowed to enter Courland. The union of the Swedes with the Russian army happened very inopportunely for us, as it took place at the very moment when the other allied sovereigns were directing their extraordinary ambassadors to renew assurances of their friendly sentiments to the Emperor.

The King of Prussia disavowed any participation in the conduct of his general. He sent an ambassador to the Emperor in the month of January, and General Yorck was condemned by a court-martial; but, such was the rapid course of events, that in less than three months after he was in the ranks of our enemies.

The King long resisted the entreaties with which he was assailed in Prussia to join the Russians. The natural sincerity of his character kept him firm to our alliance in spite of the fatal results which it could not fail to draw upon him. He was driven to the determination he adopted by men of restless spirit, who told him plainly, but respectfully, that they were ready to act either with him or without him. "Well, gentlemen," replied the King, "you force me to this course; but recollect we must either conquer or be annihilated."

When the Emperor learned the defection of the Prussian corps, he summoned a privy-council; at which were present the arch-chancellor, M. de Talleyrand, the ministers, the president of the senate, and several of the grand officers of the household. The Emperor himself explained the situation of affairs, read the dispatches which announced the defection of the Prussian corps, and then proposed the following question for the consideration of the council:—"In this conjuncture,

which greatly increases the difficulty of our situation, do you advise me to negotiate for peace, or to make new exertions to continue the war?"

For my part, I was sorry to see this question submitted to the judgment of so many individuals. It ought to have been discussed in the Emperor's cabinet by two or three persons called in one after another. Numerous councils have the disadvantage of never coming to any determination, because nobody will venture to pronounce a bold opinion. Thus, in the present instance, all were inclined to remain silent.

The Emperor asked the arch-chancellor his opinion. He declared for peace; but the Emperor was in the habit of amusing himself with all the opinions of Cambacérès except on questions of legislation and jurisprudence. He next addressed himself to M. de Talleyrand, who did not reply with the frankness and decision I expected from him. Whether he did not choose to speak out before so many persons, or had some other motive for silence, he merely recommended a negotiation. The Emperor observed—"This is always your way; you go about every where saying that we must make peace; but how is peace to be made?" M. de Talleyrand replied—"Your Majesty has still negotiable means in your hands; if you delay longer, and should happen to lose them, you will then be unable to negotiate." The Emperor, getting somewhat impatient, said—"Explain yourself."—But seeing that M. de Talleyrand hesitated, he added—"I see you are still the same." Then turning suddenly to the Duke de Feltre, though there were two or three persons between him and Talleyrand, he asked his opinion on the question proposed. After a pause, M. de Feltre replied in a firm tone—"I shall consider your Majesty dishonoured if you consent to abandon a single village which has been united to France by a senatus-consultum."—"That is clear," said the Emperor; "but then what is to be done?"—"We must arm, Sire," replied M. de Feltre. The Emperor then proceeded to collect the other

votes; but no one was disposed to express an opinion different from that which appeared so agreeable to him.

M. de Feltre thought that he had fixed the opinion of the council; but he laboured under a mistake; and he must have been convinced, as well as I, when the council broke up, how much every member, in his private opinion, disapproved the rejection of M. de Talleyrand's advice. The Emperor had good reason to say, that when he called on every one for his opinion, nobody would speak out; but that, when they separated, they all blamed him for what he had said.

It was then determined at this council that we should arm to the utmost extent. The string of the bow was already well stretched, and it certainly would have broken in any other hands than those of the Emperor. We were soon after informed of the participation of Sweden in the coalition, as well as of the result of the interview between the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia; the latter having gone from Berlin to Breslaw to meet Alexander.

At Breslaw the King of Prussia renewed all the treaties which existed between him and the Autocrat before the unfortunate war which Prussia waged against France in 1806-7. This defection of the whole of Prussia produced a very unfavourable impression in the interior of France, especially as there was reason to apprehend other defections: hence there appeared no alternative but to make a bad peace, or to go on ruining the nation by efforts, the necessity for which would become every day greater, while the evil was increasing, and public spirit sensibly decaying. Napoleon in passing through Dresden claimed the execution of the promises made by the Emperor of Austria. He required that a movable corps should be employed in Galicia and Transylvania; that the Austrian contingent should be augmented to sixty thousand men; and that another minister should be sent to Paris to supply the place of the Prince of Schwartzenberg, whose presence would be useful in the army. He

added—"The alliance which we have contracted forms a permanent system, from which our people must derive such important advantages, that I am persuaded your Majesty will perform all that you promised me at Dresden, to secure the triumph of the common cause, and speedily bring about a suitable peace." The joy manifested at our disasters had already betrayed the sentiments of Austria; but it was now thought prudent to retract. M. de Bubna was sent off in all haste for Paris, and instructed to make strong professions of friendship. He was to ascertain the ideas of the Emperor on the new formation of the contingent, and to agree upon the measures necessary for rendering the troops stationed in the provinces adjoining the theatre of the war available for service in the field. As to the wish of the Emperor to conclude a peace, that he had to declare, was still more the desire of Austria. Nevertheless, according to the assurances of the ambassador, it was not for the sake of France, whose position Austria knew to be most brilliant, but for Europe and for herself that she desired peace. The progress of Russia, the preponderance which that power was endeavouring to assume, alarmed her, and therefore her political system attached her more closely than ever to France after our reverses. France, on her part, had also need of repose: her internal happiness, the happiness of the Empress, affected by the anxieties belonging to a state of war, were considerations which a like interest rendered common to the two sovereigns. Austria therefore ardently desired a peace which would place her in the only situation she was ambitious of holding in Europe, and which could not fail to consolidate the power of her ally. If any interference on her part were required, she was ready to undertake it; not pretending, however, to any influence from her own power, but only from the authority which a spirit of conciliation so disinterested as hers might give. The Emperor Napoleon had only to make known his views, and she would endeavour to realise them. He was himself perfectly

secure; he alone was able to dictate peace. The only thing necessary was, that he should not disclose the too generous bases on which he proposed to negotiate, but to leave the Austrian cabinet to act, and to hasten the preparations for a new campaign.

The Emperor was not duped by these professions; but, as there was nothing better to be done, he let the words pass, and resorted to his own measures. General Bubna on his part did not perfectly accommodate himself to the deceptions his instructions made him sow, and which he saw taking root amongst us. He often repeated to those who were disposed to listen to him that peace should be made. He made this observation to me, doubtless with the view that I should repeat it to the Emperor; adding—"Those among you who really love him ought to advise him." M. de Bubna spoke with the frankness of a man of honour: he did not understand why he should have any reserve; but the advice he gave was not easily followed. He was in Paris while the great efforts were made by which the army was recreated. He was astonished at seeing such efforts, and even entertained some hopes that peace might be obtained.

CHAPTER VIII.

A few words on the affairs of Spain—The Emperor visits the Pope—His Holiness's occupations at Fontainebleau—The Emperor's generosity to the marshals—M. de Narbonne's embassy to Vienna—Guards of honour—Motives of their institution—Mutiny of one of these regiments at Tours—Colonel Segur—M. de Netumière—The Empress appointed Regent—The Emperor's confidence in M. Menneval—Vehement speech of the war-minister.

THE winter was spent in military preparations. Some hope was entertained of the Austrian negotiations; but while they were in progress, events were advancing also.

The Emperor was still in Paris, labouring day and night to augment his resources for the approaching campaign. Before describing the transactions in France, I ought, however, to advert to what had happened in Spain after the battle of Aropiles.

The army commanded by Marshal Suchet, with whom the King was, had been joined in Valencia by Marshal Soult. They both marched under the orders of the King; first by Madrid, and then by the Guadarama and Arevalo to Salamanca, where they came up with the English army, which had retired from Burgos on being informed of the advance of these two corps. It was said that, on the evening on which they reached Salamanca, they might have engaged the English with advantage, and that they determined to postpone the attack to the following day, but then found that the enemy's army had retreated.

It is easy to be wise after events. It does not seem, however, that much reproach can be cast on generals who from prudence do not engage in a serious action at the close of day, because they wish to avoid the risk of disorder which they might not be able to prevent during the night.

After the Emperor returned from Russia he went to

Fontainebleau to visit the Pope. They seemed reciprocally pleased with each other. They dined together, and settled some points which had not been agreed upon in the negotiations at Savona. The Pope yielded to the Emperor's demands; intimating, however, some scruples as to the effect his concessions might have on temporal claims. The Emperor satisfied him on that score, and even wrote a letter to him for the special purpose of tranquillising him.* The holy father appeared quite satisfied; but the old gentleman was crafty. He proposed to consult his council; that is to say the cardinals, of whose advice he pretended he stood in need. The Emperor ordered that they should be sent to him; but they no sooner found themselves at liberty, than they filled his Holiness's head full of terrors, and persuaded him to make exceptions to the concordate which he had concluded. He protested, and wrote a long letter to the Emperor, in which he expressed his compunctions and scruples. The Emperor, whose patience was worn out, ordered that, notwithstanding the absurd disavowal of the Pope, the concordate should be promulgated and declared a law of the state.

The holy father was very penurious: notwithstanding that all his wants were amply provided for, he used to count over with great care some dozen pieces of gold which he had in his desk.

He kept a strict account of his wardrobe, from his pontifical robes to his shirts, stockings, and the most trifling article of his dress.

He never looked into a book during the whole day; but employed himself in a way which would not be credited, had it not been notorious. He patched and stitched up any accidental rent in his gowns, sewed buttons on his small-clothes, and washed the front of his robes to clear them of the stains of snuff, which he took to excess.†

* See the end of the volume.

† Ibid.

A large dose of illusion certainly fell to the share of those who could believe in the infallibility of a being in whom the weakness of human nature was so strikingly exemplified.

At Fontainebleau he had a thousand ways of employing his time. He had a splendid library, not a book in which he ever touched: he avoided seeing almost every body, except the cardinals who were restored to him.

The Emperor was so pressed by events, that he could not terminate the business with the Pope before he was obliged to set out for the campaign of 1813.

He had brought some of the marshals to Paris, in order to give them some repose before they rejoined the army.

On dispatching them to take the command of their respective corps, the generosity he displayed towards them was truly magnificent. He gave Marshal Ney one hundred thousand crowns, and Marshal Oudinot five hundred thousand francs: to the latter an additional grant was made of two hundred thousand francs, on account of his house at Bar-Sur-Ornain being burnt down.

At this epoch General Lecourbe was denounced to the Emperor, as being engaged in selling his property with the view of entering into the service of Russia.

As the information might be well-founded, the Emperor ordered measures to be taken to prevent the execution of any plan of the kind. On this account General Lecourbe was sent to Auvergne, under the guardianship of the police, instead of being allowed to remain in Franche-Comté, where he then was. As a farther precaution, an order was served on General Dutailli, prohibiting the payment of the price of an estate he had purchased from General Lecourbe.

Before commencing the campaign the Emperor sent M. de Narbonne to Vienna, as ambassador, in the place of M. Otto, who had allowed himself to be a little imposed upon by the professions of Metternich.

Unfortunately, when M. de Narbonne arrived, Austria had

already resolved to take advantage of our situation to obtain a settlement of the old account she had against us. The combined Russian and Prussian armies were approaching; and our army having repassed the Elbe, they had entered Dresden, whence the King of Saxony had been obliged to make a hasty retreat. He had come there, as well as his troops in Bohemia, on the pressing solicitations of the Emperor of Austria, who neglected no means to impose upon him, and induce him to enter into the coalition against France.

The Emperor saw clearly what was going on; and I believe it was chiefly with the view of securing Austria and Saxony that he hastened his departure, in the hope of regaining the favour of fortune. He only regretted that he had not a month longer for preparation, to enable him to bring up all the troops which were on their way to the army, and in particular the cavalry, a considerable portion of which consisted of draughts from the army in Spain. About this time orders were given for forming the regiments of cavalry called guards of honour; a measure which many efforts were employed to render unpopular. In levying these regiments of young men there were two objects, which I shall explain.

The necessity of obtaining cavalry was admitted. Every man obtainable from the conscription-lists was taken for the infantry; and besides, the peasantry could not be speedily converted into cavalry. They must have been taught riding, and every thing necessary in the management of a horse. On the contrary, the class of young men in easy circumstances abounded in good riders, who required only to be enrolled to become at once excellent military horsemen. It was very truly observed, that the greater part of these young men had already been ransomed by their families from military service, or had otherwise completely satisfied the conscription. But on revising the conscription-lists, men

who had already passed through the ordeal were again made liable to be drawn. It would then assuredly have been wrong to spare the class most numerous in men fit for military service, at a time when the exigency of circumstances rendered injustice unavoidable towards those who were less able to bear a burden, which always presses with great severity on the aged poor who are dependent on the labour of the younger part of their families.

It would doubtless have been very desirable to avoid such a measure; but the impossibility of being otherwise extricated from the difficulty, was a sufficient warrant for the government to resort to such means. The measure was, however, a great source of discontent; for each of these youths had a number of relations whose complaints were long and loud, whereas the country people of the labouring classes obeyed the call to join the army without murmuring. These guards of honour might well have been asked how they came to think so much more of themselves than others, as to pretend that they were to stay at home when all France was flying to arms.

The second object was to withdraw from an idle and unsettled life a numerous class of young men whose ardent spirits make them always ready for hazardous enterprises, and who might become dangerous under the ascendency of some daring man in possession of their confidence.

There was little difficulty with these guards of honour, except in getting them to leave the paternal roof. Once regimented, they acquired the military spirit in perfection. Out of the great number of the young men drawn, there were very few defaulters. In vain was the cry of tyranny set up: more than ten thousand youths of this class were raised, and formed into four fine regiments of two thousand five hundred men each.

The regiment which was embodied at Tours was the only

one which gave any cause for vigilance on the part of the police.

I was informed that the young men who composed that regiment had been instigated to mutiny, and that advice of a very criminal kind had been given them.

M. de la Rochejacquelain, who formerly served in La Vendée, was in the habit of appearing frequently at Tours, though his place of residence was at a considerable distance from that town. My information was sufficiently precise to induce me to adopt a decided course.

The colonel of this regiment of guards was M. Philippe de Segur. I wrote to him to arrest one or two of the young men, whom I pointed out to him, and to send them up to Paris.

While preparations were making for sending off the prisoners, a little insurrection broke out in the new corps. One of the young men, named M. de Netumière, called upon M. de Segur, and demanded the liberation of his comrades. On meeting a refusal, the youth fired a pistol at his colonel's head. The grains of the powder stuck in M. de Segur's face, and the ball penetrated his neckcloth, but did him no other harm.

Young Netumière was sent to Paris along with the other lads whom I had ordered to be arrested. The situation in which he had placed himself was clear, and there appeared no means of saving him; at the bottom, however, he was merely a hair-brained youth, and quite incapable of deliberately committing a crime. I prosecuted my inquiries as far as I thought necessary. In the mean time, the Duke de Feltre wrote to me several times to deliver up Netumière to him, in order to have him tried by a court-martial. It may easily be imagined what would have become of him had I complied. To shelter him from the consequence of this demand of the war-minister, I included him in the information

I ordered to be drawn up against his comrades. By this means I kept him in prison, where he remained entirely at my disposal.

The events of 1814 occurred; and then the Duke de Feltre would much sooner have given M. de Netumière the command of a regiment than thought of bringing him before a court-martial.

Before leaving Paris, the Emperor wished to guard against the consequences of a second enterprise such as Mallet's. Hitherto, during his absence, the government had resided in the council of ministers, of which the arch-chancellor was president; but a minister might die, or be rendered incapable of discharging the duties of his office by sickness; and under such circumstances no person could be authorised to use his signature, except by a decree of the Emperor. Such a decree, however, might not arrive when wanted; and it would then happen that whatever was ordered in a particular branch of the administration would be in danger of not being executed.

To obviate this inconvenience, he appointed the Empress Regent, and constituted a council for her guidance. He had thus always present a power capable of delegating whatever authority might be needful for extraordinary occasions. There was much grace in the manner in which he invested the Empress with this power.

Several days were devoted to the preparation of a plan of regency. The proceedings which took place at different periods of our history, when female regents were at the head of the state, were consulted for precedents. When every thing was ready, he convoked a privy-council, to which the Empress repaired in grand ceremony, accompanied by the great officers of her household, and took her place beside the Emperor. After a moment's silence, a decree for appointing a regency, and determining its powers, was read: the same decree declared, that this authority was conferred

by the Emperor on the Empress. Her Majesty then took the oaths to govern the state according to the laws and constitution, and to resign her authority when called upon by the Emperor so to do.

After the ceremony her Majesty returned to her apartments, accompanied by the Emperor.

The conferring of this authority on the Empress Maria Louisa was generally approved. Her good and amiable character was well known; and she was consequently much loved and esteemed. Every one connected with her household had experience of her kindness; and it might with truth be said that she had won the good-will of the nation, which regarded her with an affectionate respect. For this popularity she was mainly indebted to the propriety of her conduct. She always observed the strictest decorum; and by her deference to public opinion, she secured its favour with more certainty than she could have done by the greatest and most successful administrative labours. To assist the Empress in the business she had to transact during her regency, the Emperor attached to her service a man in whom he had the greatest confidence, his private secretary M. de Menneval. This was a sacrifice which he imposed on himself, and he directed M. de Menneval to write to him daily.

Before leaving Paris, the Emperor finally constituted the new paid-guard of the capital as it now exists. In the council of ministers, the plan which I had presented for re-establishing this corps, and in which he had made some alterations, being read, he said, addressing the war-minister, "What is your opinion of this, Sir?" The minister replied, reddening, "Sire, your Majesty is at liberty to do as you please; but with such a plan as this, I have no means of preventing the minister of the police from making himself *maire du palais*, and dethroning your Majesty, or your son." "Oh," replied the Emperor, "that is nonsense. It is not the minister of the police who can do that. He must have

the same means of keeping you in check as you wish to have for keeping him so. If this be your only objection to the plan, I do not consider it a valid one." The plan was adopted.

I then observed to the minister for the war-department that I should not be the first of the two to forsake the Emperor or his son. I then little thought that the truth of my assertion would so speedily be proved. M. de Feltre did not think of what he said, and I cherished but little resentment against him, as will be seen in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

The affair of the capitulation of Baylen is brought before a court-martial—Its result—My revenge on the minister for the war-department—Symptoms of disturbance in La Vendée—Zeal of the Duke de Feltre—The mountain in labour.

About this time the Emperor brought General Dupont to trial for the capitulation of Baylen. There were implicated in that affair several generals whom the Emperor would have employed had they been otherwise situated. Besides, the investigation of this business had been long pending, and the delay of the trial seemed like a despotic proceeding, and a refusal to render justice to the accused. Their rank rendered them amenable only to a high national court; and previous to forming the tribunal, the Emperor wished to ascertain whether the accused were really guilty. He did not wish to pronounce an opinion which might be an authority for what any one might say on the subject. Consequently he submitted the affair to the examination of a council of state, in which the accused were to be heard in their defence. He added to the council, for this occasion only, all the marshals

of the empire who were at that time in Paris. This trial excited a high degree of public interest. The facts were clear and positive; and though General Dupont's friends had rendered him great service by suppressing in the minutes several documents which might have told against him, yet the consequences of the affair of Baylen were so fatal, that it could not fail to excite strong dissatisfaction. There is no doubt, that had the council of state pronounced the opinion which was derived from the elucidation of the facts, the accused would have been declared guilty, and consequently exposed to all the severity of a sentence which would have operated as a great example.

If the council of state did not decidedly pronounce the guilt of the accused, it could only be because they knew the impossibility of then saving men who had been the comrades of several of its members. If the council referred them to the mercy of the Emperor, it was because they were well assured of his indulgence; otherwise it would have been equivalent to a condemnation.

Accordingly the Emperor did not bring any of the accused parties before the courts. He contented himself with imprisoning General Dupont, and depriving him of the honours which had been conferred on him on former occasions. He dismissed from the military service the generals who had taken part in the capitulation of Baylen; but he regretted the fate of General Vedel, whom he particularly esteemed for his courage, and whom he intended to have employed after the trial. However, he could not act impartially without this sacrifice.

Thus terminated the disgraceful affair of Baylen. None but the most barefaced calumniator will presume to assert that the Emperor behaved tyrannically towards generals, all of whom, with the exception of Vedel, had most decidedly failed in their duty. He might be more justly reproached for an indulgence which often degenerated into weakness.

He was always ready to pardon: generosity was one of the predominant sentiments of his heart. I am convinced that he would never have doomed an enemy to death. Was he ever known to avail himself of his fortune in arms in the way in which his enemies employed theirs against him? I will here relate an anecdote concerning M. de Feltre.

The seizure of General Dupont's papers gave me the opportunity of seeing several letters from General Clarck (Duke de Feltre) to General Dupont. They were all written in Italy, and were of very old date. On perusing them, I found that they were reports addressed by Clarck to Dupont respecting General Bonaparte, after the latter had explained to him the nature of the mission with which he was charged in Italy.

It will be recollected that Dupont was at that time chief of the war-depôt under the Director Carnot, and that Clarck was under General Dupont, who had given him a commission (which however was merely a mask) to reside at the head-quarters of the army of Italy, and report the proceedings and plans of General Bonaparte; because, no doubt, he was suspected of aspiring to the supreme power. It was during this residence in Italy that the letters to which I have alluded were written. He was still acting as an observer of General Bonaparte when the 18th Fructidor overthrew the faction of the Directory, to which he was attached, and he lost both favour and employment. However, General Bonaparte, whom he continued to watch, even after explanations between them on the nature of his mission, received, assisted him, and sheltered him beneath his power, when he had only to withdraw his protection in order to ruin him.

I had in my possession those letters, which completely belie his professions of attachment to the Emperor.

I might have shown these letters, and thus have ruined the character of the Duke de Feltre; but instead of that, I returned them to him without having mentioned them to

any one. I was unwilling to show any resentment, or to diminish the confidence which the Emperor reposed in a minister who was useful to him, and who loudly professed the most sincere devotedness to his sovereign.

He evinced this devotedness on another occasion, which occurred before the Emperor's departure for the army, always seeking to prove that, but for him, the tranquillity of the empire could not exist, and that our security depended entirely on his zeal for the service of the Emperor. The successive demands for troops, which had been repeated within so short a time, had produced a bad effect in different parts of the country. There was no insurrection in the western departments; but the system of pillage again commenced; that is to say, a band of about fifty robbers infested the country, firing on the gendarmerie, and plundering every body from whom they could obtain any thing. These wretches, wishing to excite in their favour a portion of the population, from whom they might obtain protection, and procure that information without which they could neither maintain themselves nor elude the pursuit of justice, styled themselves royalists, and asserted that they were sent by the King to organise an army in La Vendée.

They threatened the young men, who were called out by the conscription, that if they joined the army their parents' houses should be burnt, and themselves shot if they were taken.

The sudden appearance of this little band was like the sound of the tocsin in the different government departments. The event was proclaimed on all sides; but at the same time every one felt satisfied about the tranquillity of the country, which the inhabitants of the departments were determined to maintain. The war-minister cried *tolle* from the house-tops, declaring, that if precautions were not taken, the Bourbons would come to Paris while the Emperor was making the next campaign. He made no scruple of announcing as infor-

mation, which he pretended he had received from a general holding a command in the western departments, that a gentleman with a white cockade had been going about that part of the country on horseback, endeavouring to enlist followers. Every person of common sense saw the absurdity of this report of a man recruiting with a white cockade, at a time when any body who might have ventured to wear one would have been torn to pieces.

The Emperor, though he did not place much reliance on this information, nevertheless did not despise it. He directed me to investigate the truth. I learned that this gentleman with the white cockade was a farmer residing on the road from Alençon to Le Mans. He was an old officer of the revolution, and he had been a purchaser of the national domains. The Emperor shrugged up his shoulders when he saw the credulity with which reports were circulated which tended only to induce him to adopt measures of severity towards peaceable citizens, who dreaded, instead of wishing, the return of civil dissension. The accusation of the war-minister might have had the effect of causing the arrest of almost all the ancient nobility of the Maine, Anjou and Perche.

If that measure was not adopted, it was because, whenever the Emperor received accurate information, his judgment was always correct, and he was naturally inclined to indulgence. What then was the object of the Duke de Feltre, if he himself was not the dupe of the mistaken zeal of his informant? Doubtless to make a show of his own zeal by proving that, in spite of his excessive occupation, he bestowed attention on every thing that personally interested the Emperor, and that but for his prodigious vigilance, the safety of the empire would never be for a moment certain.

While the war-minister was thus getting up stories to answer his own ends, I was engaged in the pursuit of the band of plunderers, who had already committed several murders in the department of La Sarthe. Some of them were

taken, and pardon was offered to the rest on condition of their quitting the department. They consented, and surrendered themselves to the prefect of Le Mans. They were then conveyed to the department of the Yonne, and dispersed through the communes, where they applied themselves industriously to agricultural labours. This little pacification proved that I was right in my conjecture, and that these pretended royalists were nothing but deserters flying from the pursuit of the gendarmerie, against whom they defended themselves with musket-shot.

The gendarmerie in the western departments was excellent. It was commanded by Colonel Henry, a man of singular courage and rectitude, capable of managing, satisfactorily, any honourable business in which he might be employed. We were indebted to him for many services, which his conciliatory character enabled him to perform. The Emperor, before his departure for the army, learned the evacuation of Hamburgh, by General Carra Saint-Cyr, the same who was unfortunate at Wagram. This event vexed the Emperor exceedingly, because it was followed by an eruption of the enemy's light troops, who advanced as far as the Weser and the Esler, and passed those two rivers at several points. He sent Marshal Davout to command the troops who were to retake Hamburgh, and called to the army General Lauriston, whom he had previously sent to Hamburgh, and afterwards to Magdeburg. The Russian and Prussian grand armies had passed the Elbe at Dresden, and were advancing to Leipsic.

CHAPTER X.

The Emperor quits Paris—Position of the army—Manœuvres of the Emperor—Battle of Lutzen—Death of Bessières—Reflections on the conduct of Austria—General Thielmann.

AUSTRIA had not yet declared herself against us; but she signified that the contingent she had supplied to our army, during the last campaign, should take no part in the hostilities; so that while she deprived us of resources, the enemy might combine a force as great, or even greater, against us.

The time was short. Insurrections had broken out in Westphalia and Berg; and a crisis was approaching, when the Emperor set out to head the army. He had given the command of a corps to Marshal Marmont; and he had brought from Leybach, in Illyria, General Bertrand, with the remainder of the French troops who were in that province. They passed through Bavaria by the way of the Tyrol; and were formed into an army corps at Augsburg, whence they marched on Bamberg and the banks of the Saale.

Our army had successively retired into Thuringen. The Emperor rejoined it, and soon rallied the courage of the troops.

He spent some days in combining his different army corps, and observing the plans of the enemy. He soon formed an estimate of the generals whom he had to oppose.

He was greatly inferior to the enemy in numbers, and the quality of his troops was indifferent; but his genius made amends for these disadvantages, and his success was not doubtful.

He found his army in the following position:—

The Viceroy, who commanded the wreck of the army of the preceding campaign, had recrossed the Elbe at Magdeburg,

and had stationed himself at Mersburg. He had sustained a very considerable loss at Halle, where he recrossed to the left bank of the Saale. He had with him Marshals Macdonald and Victor. The troops who came from France arrived by the way of Weimar, and crossed the Saale by the bridge of Kesen, near Naumburg.

Those who came from Italy arrived by the valley of the Mein, Cronach, Schleist, Nauma and Gerz.

The Emperor had only ten squadrons of cavalry, and the enemy had upwards of a hundred. But, on the other hand, our artillery was formidable.

The Emperor put his troops in motion as soon as he learned that the enemy was advancing to meet him. He proceeded in the direction of Leipsic, making the Viceroy march from Maesburg to Marck Ranstadt, while he himself took the high road from Weissenfels and Leipsic to Lutzen.

It must be observed that the object of the Emperor's manœuvre was to approach the fortresses of the Elbe, where he had bridges and garrisons. These were Torgau, Wittemberg, and Magdeburg.

On the 2nd of May the whole army was in motion, between Weissenfels and Leipsic. Its van had already proceeded beyond Lutzen, when it was attacked at Kaya, on the road between Lutzen and Pegau, by which the Russian and Prussian armies, which were marching to intercept our line of communication, passed when they attacked Marshal Ney, who was posted at Kaya.

The Emperor immediately formed his army in the order of battle in the following manner:—The Viceroy, who was on the left, supporting Marck Ranstadt, had with him General Macdonald. On the right of the Prince was General Lauriston, who commanded an army corps. Farther to the right was Marshal Marmont, and then General Bertrand. Marshal Mortier was in reserve with the infantry of the young guard. Marshal Oudinot had not yet arrived with the troops which he

was bringing from France; and finally, Marshal Ney was at Kaya. The army had the road from Weissenfels to Leipsic in its rear, and the field of battle was intersected diagonally by a stream called the Flossgraben.

The key of the position was the village of Kaya, which was occupied by Marshal Ney, and through which ran the road from Pegau to Lutzen. Had the enemy succeeded in carrying this place, he would have advanced to Lutzen, and thus divided the French army into two portions, which could only have been reunited on the other bank of the Saale. Thus great efforts were made to preserve Kaya, which was taken and retaken several times in the course of the day.

The engagement commenced at eleven in the morning of the 2nd of May, 1813. At four in the evening Kaya was forced. The Emperor proceeded thither himself, amidst a shower of musket-shot. The troops were not routed, but they had to contend with a very strong force. He rallied them, and stationed himself on the right of Marshal Ney's corps, whence he discerned the columns of the enemy's infantry, with which the ground was thickly covered. They were marching from Pegau on the road leading to Kaya, which the enemy already occupied, and by which he was preparing to debouch upon Lutzen. On this movement depended the winning or losing the battle. The Emperor ordered his aide-de-camp, the general of artillery, Drouot, to collect with all speed sixty pieces of reserve cannon, to take the command of them, and to advance as closely as possible on the enemy's columns, and to attack him obliquely on his left flank.* This order was executed literally; and it made such ravages on the enemy's columns for the space of an hour, that he could not resist the vigorous attack which the Emperor renewed on Kaya, by Marshal Mortier's corps, which he had advanced from the reserve. The village was carried; and this decided the retreat of the Russian and

* For this the course of the Flossgraben afforded an advantageous position.

Prussian armies, who recrossed the Esler at Pegau and Zwickau.

If the Emperor had had twenty thousand cavalry with which he could have made a vigorous charge after the cannonade, there is no doubt but he would have gained such a victory as would have decided the whole of the campaign. But the want of this cavalry obliged him to pursue the enemy in close column.

He was too weak to detach any corps from his army, or he could have marched straight to Berlin: he was therefore obliged to arrange his plans according to what the enemy might do in case of his having as much infantry and artillery as we had, in addition to his immense force of cavalry.

At the battle of Lutzen, or rather the day before it, the Emperor sustained a severe loss in the death of Marshal Bessières, who fell by a cannon-ball at Posarna, between Weissenfels and Lutzen. The death of this old and faithful servant produced a void in the Emperor's heart. Fate deprived him of his friends, as if to prepare him for the severe reverses which she had yet in store for him.

On the evening of the battle of Lutzen the army remained in close column, through fear of the enemy's cavalry, which attempted several charges during the night; but the reception they experienced compelled them at length to relinquish these attacks. The night was so exceedingly dark, that nothing could be seen at the distance of ten paces; and there were so few cavalry troops in our army, that the squares of infantry were ordered to fire on every horseman who might appear in sight: for it was looked upon as certain that they must belong to the enemy.

After the battle of Lutzen the Emperor again sent his aide-de-camp, General Flahaut, to inform the King of Saxony of the event. When that sovereign evacuated Dresden, he retired to Prague; and at the entreaties of the court of Austria, he had resolved to retire into Austria, perhaps even

to go to Vienna. Before the opening of the campaign, the Emperor sent one of his aides-de-camp to inform the King of what he intended to do, and to prevail on him to remain in Bohemia, there to await the issue of events. This aide-de-camp joined the King at Lintz in Austria; and from what he said, his Majesty was induced to return to Prague, where M. de Flahaut found him.

The battle of Lutzen proved an incalculable advantage to us. It secured us against new defections in Germany,* and thereby restored that confidence in the future which we had previously lost. *Te Deum* was sung every where. The Empress ordered it to be sung at Notre Dame, whither she herself repaired in state. She was attended by the whole court, and the troops of the guard; and the public received her with expressions of the most ardent enthusiasm. When she entered Notre Dame, the plaudits of the multitude almost rent the roof of that majestic structure.

The French soon recover from any great depression. Before the battle of Lutzen we had all thought ourselves ruined; and immediately after we expected peace, at least we hoped that it would at all events speedily follow so glorious an event. This inspired courage; and all concurred in admiring the talent with which the Emperor had extricated himself from his imminent peril, so that the attachment of which he had so long been the object lost none of its force or sincerity.

It may here be observed, that had the Austrians, instead of their tergiversation, supplied the contingent which they owed us in fulfilment of our treaties with them, which they scrupulously observed during our prosperity, peace would have been concluded immediately after the battle of Lutzen; for the allies would not have incurred the chances of a new campaign; or if they had, the Austrian cavalry would have

* The Empress expressed great joy at the event, because, she said, it would secure her countrymen, whom she suspected of wavering.

enabled us to profit by the victory. But the allies would not have incurred such a risk. If they had not known the intentions of Austria, they would not have crossed the Elbe; and, perhaps, they would have remained on the other side of the Vistula. Russia now reaped the fruit of the conduct of which she set the example in 1809, in taking no part in the campaign. This is called policy; but any monarch of the fifteenth century would have blushed to have acted so; and it remained for the eighteenth century to witness repeated instances of such conduct, among the other improvements of this enlightened age.

It would have been more honourable on the part of Austria to have refused to march into Russia. She knew whither she was led, and why she was taken there; and certainly if she had refused to co-operate in the enterprise, she would not have been forced to it. Her refusal would have been honourable, and it would perhaps have occasioned the relinquishment of the enterprise.

After the battle of Lutzen the Emperor marched his army on Dresden, whither the combined Russian and Prussian forces were retiring. When their retrograde movement was no longer doubtful, and it was evident they would not come to an engagement before the Elbe, the Emperor began to manœuvre so as to approach that river at several points. Marshal Ney crossed it at Wittemberg; after which he established his right within the distance of a day's march in front of Torgau. He was replaced before Wittemberg by Marshal Victor.

General Lauriston crossed the Elbe at Torgau, where there was a Saxon garrison commanded by General Thielmann, who was also a native of Saxony. Imbued with the new doctrines which pervaded Germany, this officer refused to surrender the fortress to the allies; but he enrolled himself under their banners as soon as he heard that the King of Saxony had given it up to the French.

The Emperor, with the remainder of the army, marched upon Dresden, where he arrived on the 9th or 10th of May. He was rejoined by Marshal Soult, whom he had recalled from Spain after the junction of the Andalusian army with the troops commanded by King Joseph.

The French, in coming from Russia, had cut the bridge of Dresden in their retreat from Warsaw on the Elbe. The enemy restored it in order to cross the Elbe, and subsequently broke it on his retreat. The Emperor in his turn repaired it for the passage of his army. He remained at Dresden about ten days, in order to observe the enemy, as well as to manœuvre and wait for the troops who were marching to join him. The King of Saxony returned from Prague, and entered his capital on the 12th or 13th of June. This sovereign remained faithful to us in our adversity, as well as in our good fortune.

The Emperor directed the army towards the frontiers of Silesia. The left, consisting of the corps of Marshal Ney and General Lauriston, took the way of Dobrilugh and Hoyersverda; while the troops who had proceeded to Dresden marched on Bischofsverda. This latter portion of the army consisted of the corps of Marshal Oudinot (who had rejoined the army), Marshals Marmont, Macdonald, and General Bertrand; the foot and horse-guards; some Saxon troops, and the cavalry which had come from Spain and France. The Viceroy had been sent from Dresden to Italy, where it had become necessary to adopt precautions against the unfavourable symptoms manifested by Austria.

CHAPTER XI.

The enemy approaches the frontiers of Bohemia—An armistice—Duroc mortally wounded—He refuses surgical aid—His last moments—Some account of him—State of affairs after the conclusion of the armistice.

THE enemy's army had taken the road to Silesia, and had posted itself at Bautzen, which it occupied, as well as a second position behind, which was stronger than the first.

The Emperor ordered the enemy's position to be reconnoitred. The officers of engineers pronounced it to be assailable, and observed that it was the same which Frederick the Great had once occupied. "That may be," said the Emperor, "but Frederick is not there now."

The army commenced its motion on the left. The action commenced; and the enemy, who was outflanked on the right, and broken in the centre, was obliged to leave us masters of the field of battle.

This affair, which took place on the 20th and 21st of May, was preceded by a reconnoissance, which occasioned rather a serious engagement between Generals Bertrand and Lauriston and the enemy's corps commanded by Generals Kleist and Barclay de Tolly, who had come to reconnoitre our army.

The battle of Bautzen was a very gallant affair; for the French had only their masses of infantry to oppose to the enemy's cannon and musketry. However, the enemy retired, leaving us masters of the field of battle, but nothing else; so that affairs were no farther advanced than before.

The Russian and Prussian army retired upon Schweidnitz, by the way of Gorlitz, Bunslau, Hanau, and Leignitz. This singular march towards the frontier of Bohemia was an evident proof that they had an understanding with the Aus-

trians, otherwise they would have exposed themselves to utter destruction, because, by abandoning Breslaw to us, they afforded us an opportunity of arriving on the Oder before them, if they intended to cross the river by the bridge of Breslaw. If their design was to cross it elsewhere, we might also arrive before them at any point they might make choice of; whether they wished to defend Prussia, from which they were thus separated, and where they had left only Marshal Bulow's corps to cover Berlin; or whether they wished to cover Poland. We had in the fortress of Glogau on the Oder a garrison that still held out; so that our left, that is to say, Marshal Victor, might, as I have already said, reach the river before the enemy. It was therefore easy to foresee what would happen from the position taken by the Russian and Prussian armies, which had placed themselves at the mercy of Austria, and had abandoned Prussia to any attempt that might be made upon her.

The Emperor was fully aware of the situation of Europe, and the crisis that was approaching. He had proposed the opening of a congress in which the interests and claims of each power might be discussed and estimated. No answer had been returned to his proposal; but our late victory had somewhat damped the dreams of ambition. After their defeat, the allies acceded to the propositions which they had previously rejected. The Emperor hoped that a truce might bring about an adjustment, and he consented to an armistice. He was deeply affected by the loss of the grand-marshal, who was killed on the day after the battle of Bautzen. Duroc had just left the Emperor to give an order relative to the service of his department, and he was conversing with General Kirgener, when both were struck by a spent ball. Kirgener fell dead on the spot; and the ball tore open the abdomen of the grand-marshal, who survived for the space of thirty hours. He refused all surgical assistance, declaring that it could be of no avail, and would tend only to increase his sufferings.

He entreated that something might be given him to hasten his death; and indeed it would have been an act of humanity to have done so; but no one would render him this sad service. The Emperor went to see him, and to bid him adieu. Duroc conversed with him apparently unmindful of his situation. He spoke of France, and recommended his daughter to the Emperor. He evinced no regret at his approaching dissolution; and several times repeated that he had nothing to fear from the judgment of either God or man. He added, that the accounts of his department would be found to be in the best order.

The Emperor had stayed with Duroc a considerable time; and at length the marshal begged he would withdraw, observing that the scene was too painful for his feelings. He breathed his last a few hours afterwards. Fate thus deprived the Emperor of a man whose zeal, spirit of order, and strict integrity, were at that time most necessary to him. The Emperor deeply lamented Duroc, as he also did Bessières. The death of Duroc was an irreparable loss. The Emperor frequently rendered homage to the memory of that officer. "Duroc! Duroc!" he used to exclaim, whenever any thing was not done as he wished. Duroc was originally a pupil of the military school of Paris. On the suppression of that establishment he went to the school of Pont-à-Mousson, and he soon after entered the artillery service. He commanded the artillery of the fortress of Monaco when the Emperor was appointed commander-in-chief of the army of Italy. The general happened to see the young officer, and appreciated his talent. He made him his aide-de-camp; and they never afterwards separated. Duroc was a remarkably intelligent man; his shrewd and analytical mind enabled him to seize a subject with singular sagacity. However confused a report might be drawn up, he readily extracted from it all that was essential.

Such was his spirit of order, that having occasion to trans-

mit instructions from the army, for various things that were to be done in Paris, he pointed out the papers in his office which contained the information requisite for the execution of his orders.

It was Duroc who established that admirable regularity which prevailed in the imperial palaces, the repairs and furnishing of which he superintended. The household expenses of the court were regulated with as strict a regard to economy as the outlay of any department directly under public controul, and yet luxury and splendour were conspicuous.

In offering to suspend the movement of his troops, the Emperor hoped to bring himself into direct communication with the Russians, and thus avoid the intervention of a power whose plans had not escaped his observation. He wished for peace, but for a solid and honourable peace, founded on the interests of the different states, and not on the convenience of his enemies. Thus in his instructions as well as in his correspondence, he unceasingly recommended his plenipotentiary to think of the means of *bringing about some direct overture*. Austria, he conceived, was already in the coalition; and he preferred addressing himself to the chief, rather than communicating through the medium of one of the members of the league which was armed against him. But all was already agreed upon among the sovereigns. They had *submitted the question of peace to the cabinet of Vienna*, and that was the power to be addressed. Napoleon yielded, and accepted the mediation. Austria at length gained the object which she had been seeking by so many stratagems and artifices. But what was our natural situation? Did the treaty of Paris still subsist? Was the alliance broken up? This remained to be decided. The Duke de Bassano demanded explanations on these points. Count Metternich eagerly sought to convince him that there was no inconsistency between these two acts, and that the only object was to make some reserves. Being pressed to explain himself on the

nature of these reserves, he modestly declared that they were to extend to all the stipulations which might affect the impartiality of the mediator. This was an abuse of words; for to place all the stipulations in the reserves, was to annul the treaty. The Emperor, offended at these low artifices, offered to break off a connexion which appeared to be such a source of annoyance to Austria. Metternich refused; but in referring to the mode of discussion to be adopted at the congress, he openly declared that France was to appear there only through the medium of the cabinet of Vienna. The Emperor repelled this suggestion, and presented to Count Metternich a plan,* the object of which was to re-establish Europe on the bases on which she stood before she suffered the ravages of a thirty years' war, and to substitute a general for a partial peace, negotiated, not in the cabinet, but openly in the face of Europe. He invited all nations and all parties to

* 1st. His Majesty the Emperor of Austria offers to mediate for the general pacification.

2d. His said Majesty, in offering his mediation, does not mean to present himself as an arbiter, but as a mediator animated by perfect disinterestedness and entire impartiality, and having in view to conciliate all differences, and to facilitate, as far as lies in his power, the general pacification.

3d. The mediation extends to England, to the United States, to the King of Spain, to the regency of Cadiz, and to all the powers of the two belligerent masses.

His Majesty the Emperor of Austria will propose the cities of Vienna or Prague for the meeting of the congress.

4th. His Majesty the Emperor of the French accepts for himself and his allies the mediation of His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, as proposed by the above article.

He also accepts, for the meeting of the congress, either of the two cities of Vienna or Prague, which may be most convenient to the other belligerent powers.

5th. The French, Russian, and Prussian plenipotentiaries will assemble in the said cities during the five first days of July, under the mediation of Austria, in order to open the negotiations, and either by preliminaries, by a convention, or by a specific treaty of peace, to put a stop to the effusion of blood on the continent.

6th. If on the 20th of July one of the two belligerent parties shall notify the rupture of the armistice concluded by the convention of the 4th of June; the negotiations of the congress will not on that account experience any interruption.

debate their respective interests as they were used to do at Munster, Nimeguen, Reswick, Utrecht, &c. Metternich had no plausible objection to oppose to this. He cancelled all that was most liberal in the plan, signed the rest, and withdrew.

The Emperor of Austria had established himself in Prague under the pretence of being nearer for the communications which he had to make to both parties as mediator.

The King of Prussia and the Emperor of Russia had fixed their quarters at Schweidnitz; and they could consequently communicate with Prague as often as they pleased. The events of this period will hold so important a place in history, that it is impossible to enter too minutely into details and observations to enable the reader to judge how a successive accumulation of misfortunes at length overthrew the finest structure of glory that was ever raised by the power of genius.

An armistice was concluded. This measure proved that the Emperor did not refuse to make peace, since he had it in his power to refuse a suspension of arms, which deprived him of the advantages he had gained over the enemy since the commencement of hostilities. There could be no doubt, it was said, that the Russians wished for peace; and yet it was not concluded. Let us see why.

The Austrians had been our allies since the campaign of 1812. If that had been successful, it would no doubt have been followed by some arrangements prejudicial to Russia, and favourable to Prussia and Austria.

In the situation in which affairs then were, there could be no thought of such a design. Peace could only be concluded on other bases. Consequently the Emperor never proposed to renew the projects of the preceding campaign. The events of Lutzen and Bautzen had not advanced his interests sufficiently for that.

But if it was believed that sacrifices ought not to be de-

manded from the Russians and Prussians, it at least appeared unjust to think of requiring the Emperor to make, on his part, such great sacrifices, for the satisfaction of all parties. Nevertheless this was proposed; and by whom? By allies who had not only abandoned and acknowledged by treaties the cession of provinces, which they now reclaimed, but who had marched under his banners to aid him in acquiring new possessions, on no other condition than that some portion should revert to them.

If the Austrians had no other object in view than to secure peace, it would have been sufficient for them, even though they had not remained our allies, to have refrained from taking part in the war, since they believed they might honourably forsake us in the circumstances in which we were placed.

Had the Austrians remained neutral, Russia and Prussia would have been obliged to conclude peace. Their resources were already exhausted, and they had been compelled to retreat from the very opening of the campaign. They would have treated on the Oder for more reasonable conditions than those which would have been imposed upon them on the Vistula or the Niemen.

If therefore they did not treat during this armistice, it was, as I have already observed, because they were secure of Austria. And why did they seek the support of Austria? It was not for obtaining conditions which they well knew could not be withheld from them, nor for rejecting others which could not be proposed; but because the Emperor of Russia would not again expose himself to the danger he had escaped at Tilsit, and in the campaign of the preceding winter.

The best proof that it was not in the power of Russia and Prussia to refuse to treat is, that they both appealed to Austria to counterbalance, by her influence, the preponderance which the Emperor had already resumed over them.

This preponderance was continually spoken of; while

France was not allowed to object to the acquisitions which these same powers had made while she was engaged in her revolution.

The Emperor of Russia acted wisely, for his own interests, in bringing Austria to a declaration; because, if fortune had not favoured him, he might have marched back to his own states with his army, well persuaded that the French would not be inclined to follow him a second time, but would, in preference, take the road to Vienna, which the same circumstance opened to them.

The Emperor Alexander would thus have left his allies to settle the business, while he got out of the difficulty himself. If, on the contrary, fortune had proved favourable to him, he might, in the negotiations, have added his claims to those of his allies, who could not then have been satisfied but at the expense of France: that is to say, France would have been ruined; which was all Russia wanted, as she would then have had nothing to fear; and by remaining the strongest of the European powers at the close of the war, she would naturally be the arbiter of the destinies of the world.

This was certainly monstrous conduct on the part of the governments of Europe, whose state maxims seemed to be, submission to the prosperous, and bad faith to the unfortunate. Such sentiments ought to have been banished from thrones; but amidst the disasters of the period, not even monarchs were proof against corruption. We were obliged to accommodate ourselves to circumstances, without seeking from justice that which we could not attain by force.

CHAPTER XII.

The Congress of Prague—Policy of Austria—The Emperor after his victories—M. de Metternich—Result of the conferences.

After the battle of Lutzen the Emperor Napoleon wrote to the Emperor of Austria, proposing that the allies should assemble a congress at Prague.

The congress met. Russia sent as her negotiator an Alsacian, whom our laws did not permit us to acknowledge as the agent of a foreign power. Prussia sent M. de Trardenberg, who attached himself to the Russian envoy. Austria sent M. de Metternich; and England dispatched Lord Aberdeen to assist as her minister plenipotentiary at the conferences; but his Lordship did not arrive until after the rupture of the armistice. This circumstance appeared to have been foreseen by the English government; for Lord Aberdeen had also a mission as envoy to the Emperor of Austria, which character he assumed.

Napoleon had accepted the mediation from the moment when he proposed to negotiate for peace after the battle of Lutzen. It was now a month since the Emperor had demanded the opening of a congress. On the 15th of June he urged the settlement of the convention, which was to arrange the offer and the acceptance of the mediation; and he declared himself ready to sign it. He at the same time intimated, with the view of obviating all difficulties, that he could only *negotiate according to the forms consecrated by custom, and by plenipotentiaries; who, on meeting those of the other sovereigns, would exchange their full powers, and enter upon explanations.* This was a clear and precise definition of a negotiation by conferences.

M. de Metternich acceded explicitly enough to these con-

ditions in a note dated the 22nd, which he himself transmitted to Dresden on the 26th. In this note the question was again discussed, as being essentially connected with that of the mediation. There was perfect concurrence on both sides. The words "the French, Russian, and Prussian plenipotentiaries shall *meet*," were chosen by common consent, in order to establish a negotiation by conferences, and to remove all idea of an arbitration, in which each party would have separately pleaded his cause before the plenipotentiary of the mediator: an arbitration against which the Emperor distinctly and decidedly protested, and which M. de Metternich denied that the court of Vienna had ever wished for. The forms thus stipulated, were prescribed to the French plenipotentiaries in their instructions. The Count de Narbonne had been for a considerable time at Prague; and his powers were forwarded to him on the 16th. The delays of the enemy and of Austria, on the subject of the prolongation of the armistice, occasioned the departure of the Duke de Vicenza to be postponed for some days. The Duke, who no doubt guessed the disposition of the foreign powers, and who foresaw the result, instead of hurrying his departure, retarded it by applications for money and other economical arrangements. At length he set out on the 27th.

The Emperor, who had secretly received some hints relative to the engagements contracted at Trashenberg, by Austria with the allies, set out at four on the morning of the 25th for Mentz, in order to determine the measures to be taken in France, in the event which, though not certain, was at least probable, of the continuance of the war, and to secure himself even against Austria, as he himself said in his letter of the 29th of July to the Duke of Vicenza. The general aspect of affairs produced an obvious impression on his mind.

On the arrival of the Duke de Vicenza, M. de Metternich knew that the Emperor was absent, and that he alone could authorise modifications in the forms agreed upon for the ne-

gotiations. He arranged his plans accordingly. When he found that he had no longer any hope of preventing the opening of the congress, and when the French plenipotentiaries demanded a general exchange of powers, he rejected the form that had been settled for the conferences, and proposed transactions by writing, quoting very inapplicably the example of the congress of Teschen, which was a solitary exception from the general custom. At that congress there were *two mediators* instead of one, who negotiated together, each representing the interests of the party who had chosen him; and there was not, as at Prague, a general negotiation of the great interests of the public law of Europe, but merely of the Bavarian succession. M. de Metternich, twelve days before the declaration of the armistice, thus checked the negotiation in the outset, by a difficulty which obliged the French plenipotentiaries to wait for the commands of the Emperor, who was in France. The Austrian manifesto, written by M. Von Gentz, contains a sort of avowal of the artifice of the cabinet of Vienna. "The form in which the full powers were to be exhibited, and the reciprocal declarations opened, matters on which there had already been conferences on all sides, became the subject of a discussion which baffled all the efforts of the mediating minister."

The conduct which Austria pursued at Prague perfectly corresponded with the course she had adopted since the commencement of the negotiations. She began by mingling her own private claims with those of the other allies, wishing to constitute herself the arbiter of the disputes which divided them. Thus the question at issue was no longer the termination of the first war, but the commencement of a new one; and all that had been settled in the treaties which followed that of Luneville again came under consideration. Austria styled herself a mediator; that is to say, being placed between the two parties, she did not concern herself about the interests of either, but thought only of her own, reserving to

herself the privilege of taking part with the power who might offer her facilities for recovering cheaply the object of her ambition. Now, as all that she had lost in her wars with France was either in our hands or in those of our allies, it cost the Emperor of Russia nothing to promise that her losses should be made good; because, at all events, he was not obliged to fulfil his promise, had military events proved unfortunate, as they well nigh did.

Austria knew that she had no right to expect what she demanded, except from the weakness to which her conduct had reduced us. This was her security on the one hand, and on the other she knew that Russia and Prussia could only conclude a disadvantageous peace without her concurrence. She had this superiority, that she knew her situation, and turned it to the best account; because, in making war for war's sake, it was reasonable to adopt the course by which there was most to be gained. All this should have been understood before we went to Prague to oppose arguments and refute propositions, which though unreasonable, and dictated by bad faith, were nevertheless those of the stronger party. We should either not have gone there; or, if we did, we should have made up in talent what we wanted in the illusion of power, to enable us to triumph over the artifice of M. de Metternich. But we were in a difficult situation. We were to be crushed without mercy: though the Emperor, far from taking an undue advantage of any of his victories, had always refrained from oppressing the vanquished. He constantly checked himself in his triumphs, being reluctant, as he used to say, to reduce a nation to despair. In Italy he made the first step towards reconciling the French revolution with Europe; and he laid the bases of a peace, which was signed at Campo Formio. After the battles of Marengo and Hohenlinden he stopped, when it was in his power to have marched to Vienna. After the battle of Austerlitz he stopped short, when it was in his power to have confounded the most

shameful of aggressions. And at Tilsit, after the battle of Friedland, he renounced all the advantages of a war still more fortunate than the first; and did not follow up his successes against a power whose forces were exhausted, because he wished to facilitate peace, and to secure the tranquillity of Europe on a steady foundation. Such examples of magnanimity deserve to be remembered.

There was another consideration which ought not to have been lost sight of by the sovereigns. Napoleon had calmed the revolutionary ferment, and had given laws to the democracy by which they had so long been menaced. He was reproached for his insatiable thirst of glory and love of war; but he had given a pledge of his wish to live in peace, by contracting an alliance with the house which had reason to cherish the strongest resentment against him, and which he would have had but little difficulty in ruining.

Another circumstance should also have been taken into account, which was, that Metternich stood in a peculiar situation. He was reproached by the Emperor of Austria for having advised the war of 1809; which France also attributed to him. He was besides unpopular among his countrymen, who had suffered by the calamities resulting from the war; and he could not but be conscious that sooner or later he would experience the resentment of France, if ever she should resume her influence at Vienna. His late conduct, as well as what he had done in 1809, had operated so much to the prejudice of France, that she could not easily forget it. Metternich recovered the good graces of his sovereign, by warmly conducting the negotiation which was commenced without his instigation, for concluding the marriage between the Archduchess and the Emperor. Thus, he caused it to be believed in France that he controlled every thing at Vienna; while at Vienna he induced a supposition that he was on good terms with France. By this means he settled his account with France; but this had no effect on public

opinion in Austria, where it was well known that he had not suggested the marriage. He however regained the favour of his countrymen, by seizing the opportunity of recovering for Austria all that she had lost during the last twenty years.

He was not obliged to account for the means he employed to gain this object. The result only is to be judged of; and that was most successful.

CHAPTER XIII.

Demands of the allies — Measures adopted by the Emperor — The King of Naples returns to the army—M. Fouché at Dresden—Conduct of the Empress-regent—Her recommendation on the subject of unpardonable offences.

THE Emperor's enemies have thought proper to report that it was in his power to have concluded peace by abandoning Dantzic and Hanover. This is a false assertion. The allies demanded the restoration of nearly all that they had lost; some by the treaty of Tilsit, and others by the treaty of Vienna, independently of what they had not recognised: for example, the union of Holland, the Hans Towns, &c. None of them mentioned the compensations they had received; for all of which they had been deprived was not loss, since they had received indemnities by the same treaties in which these cessions were stipulated. The fact is, that they had been subsequently obliged to surrender the indemnities, in consequence of the misfortunes to which their new aggressions exposed them. But since the object was to restore the equilibrium of Europe, this was not the way to gain it; for some would have acquired not only what they previously possessed, but also that which they had not possessed before the general revolution, of which they were the instigators.

I have entered into these details only to prove that the

Emperor could not have made peace so easily as his enemies have thought proper to allege; and that he was forced to continue the war, because he could not obtain a complete and lasting peace. He would have thought no sacrifice too great for the attainment of this object. He consigned the management of the negotiations to his minister, and devoted his principal attention to the reinforcement of his army; because he plainly saw that his enemies had in view to undermine his power by war. He fortified Dresden, which he had made his capital; and round which he intended to manœuvre, if a renewal of hostilities should follow the armistice. He put every place under contribution from whence he could procure a man or a horse.

He fortified Hamburgh, and withdrew almost all the troops he had there to bring them near Dresden. They were replaced at Hamburgh by Danish troops; Denmark having returned to our alliance since the battles of Lutzen and Bautzen.

The Emperor caused all the confederate princes who were yet attached to him to exert the greatest efforts; and, in short, he neglected nothing for the augmentation of his physical power, in order that it might, in some measure, react on his moral power.

He recalled the King of Naples to the army. That prince thought the Emperor ruined beyond redemption; but the victories of Lutzen and Bautzen brought him back to his duty. After the Russian campaign he abandoned the army, the command of which the Emperor had intrusted to him, and he hurried to Naples to attend to his own affairs. He was simple enough to believe that he could remain king independently of the Emperor's support. The result proved, as will by and by be seen, that, even at the time of this journey to Naples, he was in correspondence with the enemy.

The Queen of Naples was declared regent of the kingdom

previous to the departure of the King for the Russian campaign. She loved dominion; and she wanted the Emperor's authority for assuming at Naples the title which was the object of her ambition. She made good use of her power; and she had the rare talent of employing it in a way to render herself beloved. She had a firm hand, but a generous heart; and while she held the reins of government, she scattered benefits around her with an unsparing hand. She esteemed and respected her husband; but she wished to enjoy undivided power. She did not therefore oppose the return of the King to the army, as it was the means of restoring her to authority. The King of Naples rejoined the Emperor at Dresden during the armistice; and he resumed the command of what little cavalry we still possessed there.

The Emperor had likewise called the Duke of Otranto (M. Fouché) from Paris to Dresden; and hence it was inferred that he intended to employ him in the negotiations. I knew the contrary. The Emperor only called M. Fouché to Dresden to spare himself the disagreeable task of again interfering with him: for it was understood that he had begun to intrigue in Paris; and he would infallibly have caused some acts of folly, just for the sake of having it said that, while he was in office, such and such things would not have happened. M. Fouché was of a restless disposition; he always wanted to be employed on something, and generally against somebody. He had already contrived to get access to the Empress, whose favour he was eagerly endeavouring to gain, in order to turn it to his own purposes when occasion should serve.

For my own part, I was not sorry for this removal; as it relieved me from the annoyance of receiving the condolence of persons who thought it impossible that the Duke of Otranto should not return to a post, for which they considered him exclusively competent.

If the Emperor had not called him to Dresden, it is pro-

bable that he and I would not long have continued on a footing of good understanding; for I was resolved to take my revenge whenever he might attempt any intrigue, the object of which could only be to cast ridicule on me. We should then have seen which of the two would have outstripped the other. I was far from concurring with those who attributed to him a vast share of talent. It will be seen whether experience has justified my opinion.

The government of the Empress-regent was mild, and well calculated for the unfortunate circumstances in which we were placed. She presided at the council of ministers, guided by the arch-chancellor. That prince himself waited upon her, to inform her when the council was assembled; and he followed her to the chamber in which it was held.

The Empress ordered that the department of the grand-judge, whence she received reports of the proceedings of the tribunals, should not lay before her the cases of unpardonable offenders, because she did not wish to sign her name to any judgment, except for the purpose of pardoning. She granted many pardons, and she did so without ostentation. No pains were taken to trumpet forth her praise; but her merits were known and appreciated by all who surrounded her. She was simple and natural, and made no efforts to gain admiration. She received all who sought to approach her, but she never tried to attract those who were not drawn to her by sentiments of esteem.

She would no doubt, in the course of time, have had enemies, like all sovereigns; but hitherto she was the object of profound respect and general admiration. I feel pleasure in repeating, that on no occasion did I find it necessary to resort to any underhand means of securing to the Empress a good reception from the public, by whom she was sincerely esteemed and beloved.

All went on very well in France. The misfortunes we had already suffered were not adverted to, because a happy re-

sult was expected from the conferences at Prague, which had become a subject of general solicitude. Hopes of a speedy peace were confidently entertained; because the armistice, which was to expire on the 8th of July, was prolonged until the 17th of August. There was every reason to conclude that this time would be well employed, and prove sufficient for settling and terminating discussions respecting which it was so necessary to come to a good understanding.

At this conjuncture a disaster occurred in Spain which was calculated to damp the hopes entertained in France, and to embarrass the negotiations at Prague, inasmuch as the enemy might take advantage of our altered situation in Spain.

CHAPTER XIV.

Manœuvres of the English army—Battle of Vittoria—Immense loss of artillery, &c.—Our retreat—The Emperor receives the intelligence at Dresden—General Moreau—Bernadotte—Madame de Staël.

After the junction of the armies of Marshals Soult and Suchet, the English army returned to its position beyond Salamanca.

After the departure of Marshal Soult for Paris, his army remained under the command of the King of Spain.

We fell into the same error as in the preceding year. We did not pay sufficient attention to the English army, before which we ought either to have held a position, or have avoided engaging. But an evil genius presided over our arms in Spain. The generals set out each to his vice-royalty, caring but little for what might happen.

Marshal Suchet returned to Catalonia. The war-minister, the Duke de Feltre, to whom the Emperor, on his depar-

ture, left the direction of the operations in Biscay and Navarre, had employed the army which was formerly under Marshal Marmont to scour the two provinces in movable columns, and to pursue the guerillas, who certainly did not deserve so much attention as the English army; so that only the troops which had come from Andalusia remained combined in army-corps. The King was, I believe, at Valladolid, or even at Madrid, when the English army began to advance. To afford an idea of the manner in which the Emperor was served, it is sufficient to observe that the order was transmitted from Paris, directing General Clausel, who commanded the army which had been under Marmont, to form a junction with the King's army. The general's troops were in movable columns in Navarre when this order was received. The time lost for the march of the troops may be guessed from the interval that was occupied: first, in sending from the threatened point information of the approach of the English; second, in transmitting this intelligence to Paris, and demanding the employment of the troops who were in Navarre; and finally, in conveying to the latter the order for marching. There was, moreover, a very strong line of echelons for maintaining communication between Bayonne and the King's quarters.

There was at Vittoria an immense quantity of artillery, which had been accumulated there after the successive evacuations which we had been forced to make. This artillery was to have been sent to Bayonne, or at least to some other Spanish fortress; but for want of horses, or from some other cause, it had been left at Vittoria. The situation of our army was nearly such as I have just described. While all this time was lost in the French army, the English had commenced a grand movement, which they executed as tranquilly as if they had had no enemy before them.

The English general had no doubt calculated every circumstance that was likely to forward his plans; and when once he

had got the start in his movements, he kept up his advantages until the moment when fortune crowned his efforts in the plains of Vittoria.

The surrender of Astorga, and the evacuation of the whole of the kingdom of Leon, gave him the opportunity of manœuvring with all his army, after rallying the Spanish division which came from Galicia. He was enabled to conduct his troops by the back of the mountains, and to get into the road to France, so as to threaten the communication between Bayonne and our army, by debouching on Biviesca, Miranda, or Vittoria, as might be most advantageous to him.

This movement, which he would not have ventured upon before an active and manœuvring enemy, was executed, without the firing of a single gun, like a quiet march in the time of peace.

When the French army was aware of the advance of the enemy, it was too late to rally all the troops which might have been collected to oppose the English general; who, depending on no person, had it in his power to act as he pleased in any enterprise.

The French army retreated successively from the Douro on Burgos, the Ebro, and finally on Vittoria, because the English army, which was greatly superior, out-flanked our right, on which it had gained an advance. In this way the army approached Vittoria, where it was intended to wait for the junction of the troops which were expected to reinforce King Joseph's army. But the English army arrived before us, debouched on the right of our army, which engaged with Vittoria in the rear of its right, and its front facing the west; the result was not long doubtful.

Troops thus led in retreat from Cadiz to the frontiers of France could see as clearly as their generals that all the efforts they might make would be insufficient to withstand the English army, since its force was so decidedly superior.

While the whole of the line was in action, a corps of cavalry

debouched by the left of the English, and advanced on the road between Vittoria and Bayonne. This movement threw the French army into disorder, because the English cavalry pushed on to the park of artillery, and the carriages and waggons of all the refugees in the rear of the army. Every one thought then of saving the baggage, and the army was instantly in a state of complete rout. Thus troops, which a few years before were superior to the legions of ancient Rome, lost, by license and the little attention paid to them, that discipline and that high spirit, without which the most warlike nations could never attain the superiority which they acquire over others.

The battle of Vittoria was a fault. It should not have been fought; but if fought, it ought not to have been where it was, nor as it was fought; and in addition to all that, it ended in an ignominious flight.

We lost one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon; and in carriages, including those for the artillery, the equipage, and baggage, three or four times that number. The troops retired by the way of Navarre, taking with them only one piece of cannon, and not a single waggon. They rallied, and took the road to France by Pampeluna, without considering what might be the fate of General Clausel's corps, which had been ordered to join the army under King Joseph. That general had arrived in Arragon, and was ascending the banks of the Ebro through Tudela, in order to reach Miranda, where he would have been in communication with the King's army. Fortunately one of his reconnoitring parties advanced on the high road from Miranda to Vittoria, to a place called La Puebla, and made some English prisoners. General Clausel learned from these prisoners that our army, which had been defeated on the preceding day, was retreating by the way of Pampeluna, and pursued by the English army.

General Clausel was of course obliged to retrograde. He descended along the course of the Ebro, to open a communi-

cation with Marshal Suchet in Catalonia, and inform him of what had happened; intending afterwards to execute the order he had received of joining the King's army, by directing his march through Jaca and Yverdun. We were thus driven out of the whole of Spain, on the side of Navarre; and it seems as if pains had been taken to create opportunities for establishing the glory of the English army, which had now for the third time obtained a victory over ours. But the English general must himself confess that neither in the number nor the quality of our troops were we deficient in Spain. What was wanting was to give the command of them to a general who need not have been of any extraordinary capacity, but who ought to have been an active, firm, and upright man, circumspect in his conduct, and rigorously strict in his discipline.

With such a commander no one would have dared to plunder or to fail in his duty. When he required his lieutenants to join him, their sole consideration would have been how to obey him promptly, and not to find pretexts for eluding his orders, or justifying delays which repeatedly brought us to the verge of ruin.

The intelligence of this disaster completely upset all the heads in Paris. Some went so far as to rejoice at it, under the pretext that it would hasten the termination of a war which was insupportable to the nation.

The news reached the Emperor at Dresden after the armistice was renewed. Had not that been the case, hostilities would perhaps have been immediately resumed by the enemy. It may easily be conjectured how he received the account of this affair, and what painful reflections it must have occasioned.

It was about the same epoch that General Moreau appeared in Prussia. His arrival in the midst of our enemies created universal astonishment. Every one asked what was he to do in the Russian camp? why had the Emperor Alexander sent a frigate for him? what did he intend to make of him?

It was not meant that he should command or direct the Russian armies. Without disparaging the military skill of General Moreau, he had not displayed such extraordinary talents at the head of French armies that the Russians should send all the way to America and beg him to come and give them lessons. Justice to the Russian army, with which I am well acquainted, does not permit such a supposition. That army possesses a considerable number of general officers to whom nothing but opportunity is wanting to equal at least General Moreau. It was not of his military reputation that the Russians stood in need. They only wished to derive advantage from the celebrity which his misfortunes had conferred on him. This was a new resource to which the Emperor Alexander thought it advisable to resort. He hoped to make General Moreau his instrument in producing division in our army. Can it be doubted that at this time he was acting on some plan of revolution, by which, in case of success, General Moreau was to be substituted for the Emperor? What opinion ought then to be formed of the spirit in which the alliance of the Emperor of Austria was sought, when, at the same time, an after-thought of degrading his daughter was cherished; and of the conduct of the Austrian ministers, who could form that alliance without asking what was the meaning of the appearance of General Moreau at Prague, where he had just arrived? This was, it is true, only a slight outward sign; but yet from it what was intended might have been conjectured. I have always been convinced that this idea of sending to America for General Moreau was suggested to the Emperor of Russia by Bernadotte during the conference at Abo, which took place in the preceding year. I would not be surprised even if it should be found that, at the desire of Alexander, Bernadotte wrote to General Moreau, and induced him to agree to the proposition made to him.

I am the more confirmed in my opinion that the suggestion

came from Bernadotte, by the consideration that he alone was able to explain to the Emperor of Russia the facilities which existed for the execution of such a project, by making him acquainted with the antecedent relations between Moreau and Fouché, to which Bernadotte himself was no stranger, and which Alexander did not know, at least not so well as he. But I am also persuaded that the idea did not entirely originate with Bernadotte. The hint, I believe, was given to him by Madame de Staël, who passed through Sweden on her way to England, after she had, under the pretence of flying from *tyranny*, left Coppet about the beginning of the year 1812.

Since I have mentioned Madame de Staël, I may here take the liberty of devoting a few words to a lady who has thought fit to say so many on me.

She thought she did well in sparing neither reproaches nor calumnies in her works; and yet, with a clear head, such as she possessed, she must have felt that resources of that kind are always feeble. However, she perhaps may be excusable; because, living far from the scene, the picture of which she wished to draw, its shadows may have deceived her; and, in conformity with what she at that time declared, that "out of Paris she neither saw nor learned any thing," it may be thought, that wanting full light at this period, she could not better describe what she had not sufficient means of examining. All that she has said on this subject is full of bitterness, and that bitterness provoked by severe measures adopted against her. It may, perhaps, too, have had its origin in an offended vanity, which wished to give celebrity to its vengeance.

But reproaches which are founded on a false assertion can wound no one; they only injure those who so far forget themselves as to resort to such means of hostility.

Madame de Staël has done me the honour to select me, exclusively, for insult. I ought to be grateful to her for the distinction she has so kindly bestowed on me; and I am only surprised that she did not perceive how much her preference

was calculated to draw me forth from the obscurity with which she reproaches me. However, mine was the least important of the cases in which her passion misled her judgment.

If I liked revenge, I have a good opportunity for taking it here; and in doing so I would be more fortunate than Madame de Staël, who was obliged to have recourse to her imagination, whereas I should only have to relate facts. Her strong mind sometimes forgot itself. Corinna had her weaknesses, and I have a good memory.

I shall then confine myself to my subject, and will only say a few words on her journey to the north; which, according to her account of the matter, was a flight from tyranny. She once expressed a wish to go to America: no obstacle was thrown in her way. From America she might have repaired to England, since, as she said, her only wish was to breathe a *free atmosphere*. However, she preferred going to Coppet. What *tyranny* had she to fear there? Nobody would have prevented her from leaving Coppet to go to the world's end. Besides, Coppet was then, as it is now, in Switzerland; and the same *free atmosphere* was then breathed there. But Madame de Staël did not fly from the imperial tyranny: that was not what she dreaded the most; and we could even have contrived to make its burden very light to her. Human nature is so wicked and imperfect, that it seems to seek opportunities for avenging itself on every superiority which it is compelled to acknowledge. Now Madame de Staël's superiority was indisputable, and therefore no occasion for being sarcastic at her expense was missed: of course scandal did not spare her weak side. In such a situation the best remedy is a journey; but a woman plays her part to perfection when she contrives to save appearances, and to take her revenge at the same time.

Before going to St. Petersburg, she took upon herself the task of inducing Bernadotte to adopt the course wished by the

Emperor Alexander, who had at that time something else to do than to think of constitutions, as Madame de Staël would have us believe. She was the first link in the chain of the interview at Abo, where Bernadotte delivered himself up to the Emperor Alexander. It was she who started the idea of bringing Moreau from America.

Such was the way in which Madame de Staël helped the restoration! Of this, however, she took good care not to say a word in her book. The reason of this may be easily conceived; she would have been obliged to sacrifice the eulogies she has there bestowed on an event which she did not foresee, and which was quite the reverse of the turn which she hoped to give to affairs. Truly such claims as hers to the restitution of the two millions given her, in spite of the charter, which declares the sales of national property irrevocable, were, it must be confessed, entitled to particular attention. Surely the property of her father, M. Necker, was not more unjustly confiscated than was that of the poor Vendean peasants, who were buried in their own fields, which have since been disposed of according to the dictation of private interests; and M. Necker was one of the primary causes of all these public misfortunes. But Madame de Staël certainly deserved a preference; and if the moment for granting it was not the most favourable, she assuredly seized a very favourable one for asking it.

Had Madame de Staël and I been acquainted, it would have been for the advantage of both. I am now aware of the kind of enemies who tormented her; they were rivals, who felt mortified that she surpassed them in talent, or old political agitators, who, having renounced a trade which they found had become dangerous, were afraid of appearing to have the slightest intercourse with her.

At the epoch when she solicited my protection, I was not powerful enough to tax myself with the burden of her enemies in addition to my own. She could have brought me no

strength except that which she derived from me, and I should have had to support her when I could scarcely stand alone. I must therefore have made a bad bargain. She thought me a novice whom she could manage as she liked, and was angry that I distrusted her. I am now convinced that her son was right when he told me that his mother was only in a bit of bad humour about the Emperor, and that nothing would be easier than to make her throw herself at his feet, as she was at the bottom his sincere admirer. I did not believe this at the time, because there was a general cry raised against her, set up even by those whom she thought her friends.

I now acknowledge that she was much less difficult to manage than many others. I am aware since that it was she who brought about the peace between the republic and Sweden, solely that she might be able to remain in Paris, and establish herself amidst the wreck of good society.

Madame de Staël treated the Emperor ill; but what she did never could hurt him, while she became the most unhappy woman in the world at finding herself despised by him she wished to serve. Another kind of conduct would have placed materials at her disposal which she might have easily rendered more available to her glory than the base calumnies to which she did not scruple to descend.

To what I have said about General Moreau, I have to add, that on this occasion the Emperor was so ill-served by his diplomatic agents, that after that general had arrived at Berlin under an assumed name, his Majesty wrote to me to try to discover who the mysterious personage arrived at Berlin was.

I replied immediately that it was General Moreau; and that I had some time before informed him of the departure of that general from America, which intelligence I received by the arrival of an American ship in one of the French ports.

The Emperor had not read my previous dispatch; and when the second reached him the rupture of the Dresden armistice had taken place. What corroborates my opinion of the Emperor of Russia's view in sending for Moreau, is the recollection of the situation of Russian affairs when the conference at Abo took place. If the then state of things be borne in mind, it will by no means be unreasonable to conclude, that the revival of disorder and anarchy in France was the ultimate extent of the success which the Emperor Alexander could hope to obtain, in order to effect a diversion in his favour, of which he then had so much need. At that period he was far from contemplating as possible such an event as occurred on his entrance into Paris.

It ought also to be recollected, that while Moreau was with the allied army, the Count d'Artois undertook a voyage from England to the Baltic, and that Bernadotte refused to allow him to land; he then returned to England. Bernadotte prevented him from passing through Sweden, only because he wished to favour the pretensions of General Moreau. The supposition that the allied sovereigns were planning the overthrow of the empire no one had hitherto ventured to make; and the voyage of the Count d'Artois, therefore, remained unexplained. It is however probable, that his only reason for wishing to repair to the allied army was, that he had heard of some plan of subversion being adopted.

CHAPTER XV.

Marshal Soult takes the command of the army in Spain—The Empress joins the Emperor at Mentz—I ask leave to accompany her—My motives for so doing—The Emperor's reply—M. de Cazes—Renewal of hostilities—General Jomini.

THE Emperor in great haste sent Marshal Soult, who was with him, to take the command of the troops who were returning with the King of Spain. On this occasion he directed the Duke de Feltre to write to inform the King of Spain of this arrangement, lest he should hesitate to resign the command to Marshal Soult, towards whom it was known that he had not been favourably disposed since the occupation of Andalusia.

Marshal Soult proceeded to Paris with the swiftness of an arrow. He stopped there a few hours, merely to ascertain what resources the war-minister could place at his disposal; and then he set off to take the command of the army, which had nearly arrived under the walls of Bayonne, where it almost immediately established itself.

The month of July had passed over, and the conferences at Prague had yet brought about no result. We scarcely dared hope to see a termination of the war; and it might be said that the public, whose patience had been so long kept upon the rack, had become callous to the impending misfortune.

All hope of peace at length vanished, when the Emperor summoned the Empress to Mentz, instead of announcing his intended return to Paris. The Empress accordingly set out for Mentz, where she remained but a few days with the Emperor, who was accompanied only by General Drouot.

I had seized this opportunity of giving the Emperor a proof of my attachment to his person, by asking permission to

go to see him at Mentz. I wished to make him acquainted with all that I had observed, and which was not of a nature to be made the subject of written reports. I urgently entreated that the Emperor would allow me to see him; observing, that I considered it so necessary, that I had made every arrangement for managing my official business during my absence, and that I was ready to start an hour after receiving his permission, which I begged might be transmitted to me by telegraph.

My only object was to acquaint the Emperor with the dangers which I foresaw, and to urge the necessity of making peace. I wished to advert only to what he had himself done in similar circumstances, when he stopped opportunely, lest all his enemies should have it in their power to wreak their resentment at once. I would have pointed out innumerable reasons, both at home and abroad, for concluding peace at any price, for I was thoroughly convinced of the necessity of it; and I should have been deterred by no consideration, because I should not have been influenced by any ambitious project. Besides, I knew that the Emperor himself wished for peace: he had even done me the honour to write to me to that effect. The only difficulty consisted in the sacrifices which it would have been necessary to make; and this was the only point on which I expected to find him resolved not to yield. I think, however, that I could have overcome all his scruples: for the necessity of peace being once acknowledged, the sacrifices for obtaining it would have been nothing. I would have quoted to him the example of his enemies, who were at that very moment recovering what they had lost during the fifteen previous years. At that crisis, the only good policy was to yield; because the physical strength that might be lost was nothing in comparison with the moral power that would be recovered by the restoration of tranquillity. Instead of exhibiting to the Emperor the illusive picture of a victorious field of battle, I would have represented the reverse of for-

tune by which he was threatened, and which would only be proportionate to the efforts he would doubtless make to prevent it. The answer returned to my request was, that the Emperor would have permitted me to go to Mentz, if he himself could have remained there a little longer; but that it was too late, as he was to set out on the next day or the day following. He added many kind things in his letter; but they did not diminish the regret I felt at the resolution, which, I saw too plainly, had been adopted.

M. de Cazes, being informed of the Emperor's intention of going to Mentz, immediately repaired thither for the purpose of petitioning in behalf of a public functionary, his relation, who was seriously compromised. Before his departure from Paris, he obtained two letters, one from the arch-chancellor, and the other from me, in support of his petition. The Emperor received him, and gave him the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand francs out of his privy-purse to arrange an affair, which, though it did not personally concern M. de Cazes, had induced him to travel as far as Mentz. The Emperor, who was always good and generous, did not stop there; but he wrote to desire that I would employ all my influence to assist M. de Cazes in bringing to a conclusion the unpleasant business in which he was about to engage. I accordingly permitted him to take up his residence in one of my offices, whence he himself dispatched my agents in quest of the individuals with whom he had to treat. He managed so well, that the sum he received from the Emperor sufficed for all he wanted. I was not ignorant of the success he obtained, and I flatter myself that he retains the recollection of it.

The Empress returned to Paris about the time when the Emperor re-entered Dresden; and the armistice was broken off on the 17th of August, on the conditions on which it had been concluded; that is to say, it was not renewed, and hostilities were permitted. Fate had decreed that nothing

should avert the events which speedily completed our destruction. The crisis was approaching, and there were no means of escaping from the impending storm.

Here then was a rupture of the armistice; and at the same time the Emperor received the notification of Austria, in which she declared, that for the sake of hastening the conclusion of the war, she would transfer the power of her arms to the allies, who thus acquired an additional force of upwards of two hundred thousand men, while the Emperor did not gain one. In spite of this enormous disproportion of troops between him and his enemies, it will be seen how near he was of extricating himself triumphantly from his difficulties. If instead of being composed of raw troops, his army had been like that of Austerlitz, he would have performed prodigies which would have been the wonder of ages to come. But the Emperor's general officers had already imbibed a feeling of dissatisfaction, which was but too plainly perceptible.

Napoleon has frequently been compared to Louis XIV. Both, to be sure, had their intervals of prosperity and adversity. Louis XIV. was betrayed only by fortune; and Napoleon was betrayed by those on whose fidelity he had most reason to depend.

We may with advantage refute those who persist in extolling the superiority of past ages over the present. The reign of Napoleon has eclipsed that of Louis XIV.

With regard to distinguished poets, and writers in various departments, no doubt Louis XIV.'s reign supplied a vast number; but the reign of Napoleon was remarkable for the progress of science and positive knowledge. Under Napoleon, information spread; the people learned to know their own dignity; and honours and fortune were the reward of talent and public services.

Napoleon is accused of despotism; but did he ever show

himself so despotic as Louis XIV.? And were titled mistresses and legitimated princes ever seen in his court?

I leave others to complete the parallel; and I shall merely observe that in my opinion, in spite of calumny and prejudice, Napoleon surpassed Louis XIV. and all other sovereigns who can be compared with him.

Certainly none of the Emperor's lieutenants were equal to himself, and of course none of them set up the pretension of being so; therefore it is not fair to place them on a parallel with him. But they may justly be compared with other generals who figure in history:—Ney, Massena, Soult, Lannes, Davout, Suchet, Macdonald, and many others whose names I might quote, would sustain the comparison with advantage.

With such a combination of talent, how happened it that reverses overtook us? In the greatest school of war that ever existed, did no man show himself capable of embracing at once in his mind the whole operations of an army whose corps had to act in various directions? Be this as it may, I may be permitted to observe, without detracting from the justly-earned glory of our generals, that beside the Emperor, they lost a portion of their lustre, like those diamonds which emit least radiance in the brightest light.

The troops began to assemble. Marshal Ney's corps was at Liegnitz, and had begun its concentrating movement when General Jomini, who was chief staff-officer of that army-corps, went over to the enemy. This desertion justified all the suspicions which had been entertained respecting his communications with the aide-de-camp of the Emperor of Russia, which have been alluded to at the commencement of Part I. of the present volume.

General Jomini, who was a Swiss in the French service, probably thought that the Emperor could not stand against such a host of enemies; and presuming that on the fall of

Napoleon he should be left unprovided, he preferred seizing this new opportunity of trying his fortune, in which he thought himself as secure as when he first entered upon his military career.

If he had any private motives for the course he adopted, they never came to my knowledge.

Marshal Oudinot's corps, which was in the direction of Glogaw, assembled and marched by the way of Cotlens, Enbenau, and Cossen. Oudinot had with him General Bertrand's corps, and the Saxon corps commanded by General Reynier. The whole, amounting to upwards of eighty thousand men, were to march upon Berlin, and attack the corps commanded by Bernadotte, who had recently arrived with his Swedes. He had with him the corps of the Prussian General Bulow, and a considerable quantity of Prussian militia, together with some Russian troops.

This corps was estimated at one hundred thousand men, and was posted a few leagues in advance of Potsdam.

Marshal Macdonald's corps was concentrated in the neighbourhood of Lowemberg in Silesia, on the Bober. It was joined by General Lauriston's corps.

The corps of Marshals Marmont and Mortier were concentrated in the neighbourhood of Dresden, as well as the corps organised with troops newly arrived, which were commanded by Marshal Gouvion-Saint-Cyr, who had also recently joined the army.

Marshal Augereau was sent with a single division to Bavaria to support the Bavarian corps organised in the Inn-Firteld, after the declaration of war on the part of the Austrians, which event had been looked for.*

* The reader will be pleased to bear in mind that I summarily advert to military events, because they are inseparably connected with the history of the period I am describing. Not having been in the army since 1809, my judgment is open to appeal with respect to military movements. I refer such of my readers who may be interested in the subject, to those military authors who have detailed

I do not distinctly recollect the situation of Marshal Victor; but I believe he was on the left bank of the Elbe, in the direction of Wittemberg, or Torgau; but he also concentrated his troops at Dresden. General Vandamme commanded the corps of Marshal Davout, who had been sent as governor-general to Hamburgh, where the Emperor had some important plans in contemplation. Marshal Davout had with him the Danish troops, and some numerous detachments of conscripts from France; out of which he formed a magnificent army-corps.

Since this new occupation of Hamburgh by our troops, that portion of territory had been put out of the constitutional system. A great outcry was raised against this measure; which, it should be recollected, was adopted only for the purpose of keeping the people of that part of Germany in obedience, and checking insurrectionary plans.

The Emperor's design was to commence hostilities by penetrating into Silesia and Bohemia, where the three combined armies were assembled, and formed so vast a force, that none but a man of great talent and extensive experience in the mechanism of masses, could have hoped to take advantage of any facilities for attack which those of the enemy presented to us.

Officers of any nation whatever who served in the war of Italy, as well as in those of 1805 and 1807, must admit, that if the Emperor had had in Saxony an army composed of experienced troops, inured to marching, like those who followed him in his immortal campaigns, he would have dispersed all the Austrian, Russian, and Prussian forces in a very short time. He would have obliged them to manœuvre; and in this he would infallibly have had the superiority over them.

with scrupulous exactness the movements of our troops in 1812, 1813, 1814, and 1815. Situated as I was during those years, I can only describe the impressions which the various events produced on public opinion.

But his troops were undisciplined, and unused to marching; and thus fortune speedily abandoned him.

On the left bank of the Elbe there remained only the corps of Marshal Saint-Cyr, who stationed himself at Pirna to cover Dresden, which had been fortified by six good redoubts.

While the corps of Marshal Oudinot was marching upon Berlin, the Emperor advanced with the rest of his army by Dresden and Bautzen, on the Bober; but he had scarcely arrived at Lowemberg when he learned the movement that had been made by the hostile armies. They had passed from Silesia into Bohemia, by Schweidnitz, and had taken the road from Toplitz and Peterswald, to proceed to Dresden by the left bank of the Elbe. Marshal Saint-Cyr, who was at Pirna, had retired into the city, the environs of which he had garrisoned. The Emperor brought back upon Dresden, by forced marches, the whole army, except Macdonald's corps, which he left on the Bober. On the 26th of August he arrived at Dresden, at the very moment when the enemy was forcing the redoubts which surrounded the town.

The army arrived in good time. It debouched, commenced the attack, retook the redoubts which had been carried, and deployed before Dresden. This gallant exploit was performed by the young guard. The army was posted that evening, as well as during the night of the 26th of August, in the following manner :—The right wing, at which were the corps of Marshal Ney and Victor, was on the right of Dresden, with the Elbe in its rear, and having in reserve the whole of the guard and the cavalry. Dresden formed the centre of the position. The left wing had the Pirna road before its front, its right resting on Dresden. This left wing was composed of the corps of Vandamme and Saint-Cyr, and I believe Marshal Marmont.

The enemy's army formed a perfect line of circumvallation. The Russians and Prussians composed its right; and its left was almost entirely formed of Austrians.

CHAPTER XVI.

Battle of Dresden—Death of General Moreau—Retreat of the allies—Check of Vandamme's corps—Vandamme taken prisoner—Reverses—The Emperor is forced to alter his original plans—Fortune ceases to favour us.

On the 27th of August the Emperor commenced the attack by his right wing, where, as I have already observed, all the cavalry was stationed. He outflanked the extreme left of the Austrians; and, following the line of circumvallation formed by the enemy's immense army, he engaged with superior forces each of its parts, without the enormous masses by which they might have been aided putting themselves in motion. The sky had been cloudy for some time; and, as good fortune ordained, a storm came on, during which the rain fell in torrents, so that the firing of the musketry was ineffectual. Taking advantage of this circumstance, we charged the enemy's masses with our cavalry, which consisted almost entirely of very young troops. They broke the masses, and made as many prisoners as were ever taken in our most glorious battles.

In this engagement General Moreau, who followed the Emperor Alexander, had both his legs carried away by a cannon-ball. It has been alleged that this circumstance took place while the general was carrying an order from the Emperor of Russia; but as far as I have heard every version of the story differs from another.

It is not true that the death of General Moreau threw the enemy's army into disorder; that event merely thwarted a part of the plans of the Emperor of Russia, who soon adopted another design in lieu of that which had caused General Moreau to be summoned to him.

We took advantage of the storm to extend our line and

to take a position, which not only outflanked the enemy's left, but moreover enabled us to bring the whole of our line round on his rear, so that he was obliged to change his position. His innumerable columns were thus thrown into disorder. They mistook the movement which we compelled them to make for a retreat, which certainly appeared unavoidable owing to the reverses they had sustained.

The roads, at all times bad in this country, had become impassable. The cross roads in particular had suffered dreadfully from the rain. The enemy's different columns were too far distant from the defile of Peterswald, of which we were masters, and they were so closely pursued by our cavalry, that they had no way of re-entering Bohemia except by miserable defiles hitherto but little frequented. The allies lost an immense quantity of cannon and waggons, and a considerable number of troops. We calculated that we had made thirty-two or thirty-three thousand prisoners. Hitherto all went on admirably.

When the enemy's army commenced its retreat, the corps composing its right were so distant from the defiles of Bohemia, that had they endeavoured to reach them, they must have fallen into the hands of our cavalry, which already spread along the whole of the enemy's army, and extended behind his left. But they were near enough to the defile of Pirna, so that the general by whom they were commanded very reasonably directed them to retire on that point. However, only two of the corps reached their destination. The first was composed of Russians, under the command of General Osterman-Tolstoi, who occupied the enemy's extreme right; the second was composed of Prussians under the command of General Kleist, and was on the left of the former corps.

The Emperor, observing the retrograde movement of the enemy, rightly conjectured that a good portion of his force, that is to say his right, could not enter Bohemia except by Peterswald. He accordingly ordered the following move-

ment. His extreme left, as has already been mentioned, consisted of Vandamme's corps. He had on his right Marshal Saint-Cyr, and the latter had on his right Marshal Marmont, who rested on Dresden. These three corps had the Elbe in their rear, and the road from Pirna to Dresden before them.

The Emperor ordered these three columns to march by their left, taking the Pirna road. By this means General Vandamme was in advance. He was followed by Marshal Saint-Cyr, and Marshal Marmont formed the rear.

The head of this column could not reach the defile of Peterswald until after it had been passed by the Russian corps of General Tolstoi. But General Vandamme, not doubting that he would be followed by Saint-Cyr and Marmont, entered the defile without hesitation, and pursued the corps of the Russian general. Unfortunately, in thus descending into Bohemia, he did not take the precaution of guarding the defile of Peterswald which he left in his rear. He relied on the march of Saint-Cyr and Marmont, whom he said he had warned of the movement he intended to make in advance. But it matters not who was in fault on this occasion; the fact is, that Vandamme was not supported, and that the defile being thus left open, the corps of General Kleist, which followed that of General Osterman, passed, without being aware of the circumstance,* between the corps of Marshal Saint-Cyr and General Vandamme. The firing of cannon was soon heard. General Vandamme had engaged with General Osterman, and, in the heat of the action, he saw some troops debouch in his rear, which he at first took for the corps of Marshal Saint-Cyr; but they soon began to attack him. Though unable to account for this, he prepared to defend himself both in front and in his rear, by which he was weakened on all points at once. The spirit of these young troops was not equal to so difficult a situation. Vandamme vainly formed them into a square.

* This fact was attested to me by general officers in 1822.

It was penetrated, and he lost the whole of his artillery. The enemy made between seven and eight thousand prisoners, among whom was Vandamme himself. The rest of the corps being dispersed, gained the banks of the Elbe by passing through the woods, and rejoined the army.

The other corps marched as rapidly as possible in the direction of General Vandamme's cannonade; but they did not arrive until after his defeat; and thus the Prussian corps of General Kleist, which ought to have been taken, completed the dispersion of Vandamme's corps. This disaster would not have taken place if, instead of descending into Bohemia, General Vandamme had remained in the defile of Peterswald, where he might have intercepted the Prussians; or if, after having made his movement, General Saint-Cyr had come to take his place.

When this event was communicated to the Emperor he was at Dresden, suffering from a violent cholic, which had been brought on by the cold rain, to which he had been exposed during the whole of the battle of the 27th. The intelligence vexed him; but the misfortune was without remedy. He ordered his aide-de-camp, Count Lobau, to take the command of the wreck of Vandamme's corps. Between fifteen and twenty thousand men were collected: they were rearmed and equipped; and in a short time the troops recovered from the depression of spirits which their disaster had occasioned. It would have produced but little effect on the rest of the campaign had it not been for two events which speedily followed it.

The battle of Dresden had been attended by such astonishing results, that the Emperor determined on following them up, as far as the vast plan on which the operations of the allies was founded would permit him. The enormons masses of the enemy's troops returned to Bohemia by roads, naturally bad, and rendered almost impassable by the state of the weather. They must inevitably have been thrown into disorder; and

while this immense multitude was being rallied and newly formed, the Emperor would have had the start in all his movements.

Previously to Vandamme's disaster, the Emperor himself intended to have marched by the Pirna road with the corps of that general, together with those of Saint-Cyr and Marmont; and the whole were to have been followed by the guard. By this means he would have arrived with the greater portion of the army at some point in the interior of Bohemia long before the junction of the enemy's columns. Besides, he would naturally have come into communication with Marshal Macdonald's corps, which had remained on the Bober. Had this movement succeeded it would soon have been followed by a victory, more brilliant than any the Emperor had hitherto gained; and his enemies would have experienced a defeat, the more decisive in proportion as their numbers rendered them less movable. But the time which we lost in reorganising Vandamme's corps was turned to good account by the enemy.

Fortune ceased to favour us. Marshal Macdonald, who had received orders to debouch from the Bober, and to pass that river, experienced a check still more serious than that of Vandamme. He was obliged to retire in disorder, after losing a considerable number of troops, and a vast quantity of artillery.

Marshal Oudinot was ordered to march on Berlin. That city was covered by the corps of General Bulow, which had just been rejoined by the Swedes, commanded by Bernadotte.

Marshal Oudinot had with him the corps of Generals Bertrand and Reynier (the latter commanded the Saxons): he had also some other troops; and his corps altogether exceeded eighty thousand men. He marched nearly to Potsdam. General Reynier, who formed the head of a column, fell in with the enemy, and attacked him, it is said, rather precipitately, wishing to act independently of his general-in-chief,

a practice which had become too common in the army. But, at all events, it is certain that Marshal Oudinot might and ought to have arrived sooner on the field of battle. It was his duty to have prevented General Reynier from engaging alone, or he ought to have supported him by his other corps when once he was engaged. Instead of that he remained passive, and Reynier fought alone with his Saxons against the whole of Bulow's corps. His troops, finding themselves thus inhumanly sacrificed, without any efforts being made to support them, soon fell back, and took to flight. Their general tried to rally them, and an attempt was made to engage Bertrand's troops; but the impulse was given, and utter confusion soon prevailed. Marshal Oudinot sustained considerable losses in every way, and hastily retreated on the Elbe, in the direction of Torgau. He did not halt until he came under the very guns of the fortress.

This fatal event, which occurred at the same time as Marshal Macdonald's disaster, totally deranged the Emperor's plans. Instead of endeavouring to profit by the victory of the 27th, he was obliged to think of defending the right bank of the Elbe.

The Emperor repaired the losses of Marshal Oudinot by adding to his remaining force some of the troops of Marshal Ney, who was in the vicinity of Wittemberg. Ney took the command of the whole corps thus newly organised. His army had not wholly recovered from its late stroke of ill-fortune. He made a movement in advance, which corresponded with that which the Emperor was making on the Bober, whither he had proceeded with the best portion of the army to repair the check sustained by Marshal Macdonald.

If these two movements had proved successful, the natural consequence would have been, that the chief part of the allied forces who were in Bohemia would have been obliged to return to Silesia, for the purpose of opposing the Emperor. But fate ordained otherwise.

Affairs were proceeding well on the Bober, where the Emperor himself was present, when a new misfortune, which befel Marshal Ney, once more occasioned a change of plan.

Marshal Ney, yielding to the ardour of his courage, marched straightforward to a considerable distance. In the course of his movement he was attacked in front, as well as on his left flank, which was charged by Bulow's Prussians. Bulow broke Ney's line of operations, and threw him into such disorder, that his whole army hastily came back upon the Elbe, which it had but just quitted. Ney's loss was now considerably greater than before. This event brought the Emperor back upon Dresden, and obliged him to relinquish all his plans of operation on the right bank of the Elbe, in order to concentrate his troops on the left bank. He was still master of the fortresses along the course of that river, and he hoped to adopt some new method of ameliorating a state of things, which this succession of unfortunate accidents rendered most grievous. His situation was similar to that of Frederick the Great in his last campaign: but he was less fortunate than that great king; because, where Napoleon was not personally present, nothing but disasters ensued; while Frederick had some generals who knew how to gain battles.

The enemy's army had now recovered its spirit, which improved at every partial reverse we sustained. The Emperor had no more troops than those who were now collected around him, and they began to suffer the want of provisions. The scarcity increased in proportion as the circle of ground occupied by the army became more and more contracted.

CHAPTER XVII.

Marshal Augereau's march—Defection of Bavaria—Irruption of the allies into Saxony—The Emperor's movement—Battle of Leipsic—Defection of the Saxons—Passage of the Elster—Death of Prince Poniatowski.

After the battle of the 27th the Emperor thought of adding to his own army the few French troops which co-operated, under Marshal Augereau, with the Bavarian army on the Inn. These troops formed two small divisions. If the success of the battle gained at Dresden on the 27th rendered their presence useless on the Inn, the reverses which had followed that battle made it indispensable to call them to the army. The arrival of this little corps was very advantageous, but the benefit its appearance produced was not proportioned to the necessity which was felt for something which might justly serve to re-animate our hopes.

The departure of Augereau's corps left Bavaria open to the intrigues by which it was agitated. General von Wrede, finding himself relieved from all restraint, spread alarm through the country, and the news of our disasters, which travelled fast, soon determined Bavaria to follow the course which our bad fortune dictated to her. I shall return to this part of the subject presently.

The Emperor had the whole of his army on the left of the Elbe, and was threatening to extend his offensive operations to the right bank, when the grand army of the enemy issued a second time from Bohemia, where we had been obliged to leave it to repair its losses, instead of following and dispersing it according to the Emperor's original plan.

The enemy entered Saxony, and advancing through the heart of that country, proceeded to occupy all the Emperor's communications with the Saale and Leipsic,—extending, at

the same time, considerably to the left to co-operate with Bernadotte, who, after beating Marshal Ney, had passed the Elbe a little above Magdeburg. The grand army of the allies, in executing this march, studied to avoid every kind of conflict with the army under the Emperor. Had he remained on the banks of the Elbe, the enemy would have accomplished this movement without striking a blow, and would have infallibly starved him in his camp, by gradually closing round him, and avoiding coming to action. This the allies had it in their power to do, as they were quite free in the rear.

To defeat the enemy's plan the Emperor retired from the banks of the Elbe, and took a position in front of Leipsic, with the Elster in his rear; and as his object was to bring on a general battle with the view of following it up by the renewal of all the projects he contemplated after the battle of Dresden, he left the corps of General Saint-Cyr at Dresden, and good garrisons in Torgau and Wittemberg.

In war the grandest combinations are sure to be reproached as extravagant when they fail. To escape censure, success is an indispensable condition. But however severe may be the judgment which history will pronounce on the events of this epoch, it must be allowed that if this celebrated battle of Leipsic had been gained by the Emperor as that at Dresden was, nothing could have prevented him from re-marching rapidly on that city, or on other points which he occupied on the Elbe, according to the direction which the enemy might take in his retreat. Placed by this manœuvre on the string of the bow along the circuit of which the enemy must have moved to reach a rallying point, which could only have been found in Bohemia, nothing, I repeat, could have prevented the Emperor from arriving at those points before the allies, and of repairing by one signal blow all the misfortunes of the campaign. Had this happened, no words would have been thought sufficient to express the admiration such a result would have

excited; and there is not the least doubt that if he had been at the head of the army of Austerlitz, or of troops of the description he commanded before the fatal winter of 1812, his bold conception would have been crowned by the success it merited. For my part, having served under him in the glorious years of his career, I cannot allow myself to blame his enterprise at Leipsic, except for his staking on it his last resource. I can see clearly enough what he might have gained; but it does not appear to me sufficient to warrant the risk he incurred, especially when it is recollected that his troops were of inferior quality, and that his enemies had already profited by the lessons he had given them in the art of war. Nevertheless, many considerations may be urged in his favour.

When the Emperor retreated from Dresden to Leipsic he carried with him the King of Saxony and his family. The Princes of the Rhenish confederation were alarmed, but had not yet abandoned his alliance; on the contrary, he received from them assurances of their constant attachment in his bad as well as in his good fortune. On withdrawing from Saxony he would therefore have lost in the first instance the army of that country, and with it successively all the contingents, which would have served to swell the allied armies; that is to say, that the result of his retreat would have been equivalent to the losses sustained by the battle without occasioning any to the enemy.

Moreover, to retreat farther, was to abandon all that he had left on the Elbe. A great misfortune in the Emperor's situation was, that among so many veteran warriors who had on numberless occasions proved their talents in the field of battle, not one had sufficiently elevated his mind to take a just view of those high conceptions in the execution of which they so nobly concurred.

After the battle of Leipsic, while the Emperor was conducting the wreck of his army to the Rhine, there still remained in Dresden thirty thousand men, in Torgau and Wit-

temberg at least twenty-five thousand; in Magdeburg ten or twelve thousand; and in Hamburgh more than thirty thousand. All these troops were locked up. No advantage could be derived from them.

However, notwithstanding all the considerations which seem calculated to have induced the Emperor to risk fortune in a pitched battle, no one who has been intimately acquainted with him will believe that he would not have avoided it, had he been informed, as he ought to have been, that every thing he could fear, either after losing the battle, or after retiring without fighting, had already occurred on the one hand, and was fast approaching on the other.

Most assuredly, had he known that Augereau's divisions had no sooner left the banks of the Inn, than the Bavarian army opened a communication with the Austrian army, and that in consequence of the unfortunate effect of our disasters on the confederate princes of Germany, the Bavarian government, forgetting what it owed to the Emperor, almost immediately signed a treaty of alliance with Austria; had he known that in consequence of that treaty the three Bavarian divisions, which only three days before were encamped beside Marshal Augereau, had joined the Austrian army, which was previously opposed to them, and were advancing by forced marches to cut off his retreat by the left bank of the Maine, which they passed at Aschaffenburg, he would doubtless have considered it useless to fight for what was already lost. With respect to information, it was impossible to be worse served than he was during the whole of the campaign.

There still remained in the army a Bavarian division, on which he could not now permit himself to rely.

But what can never be explained, is how his diplomatic agents allowed him to remain ignorant of the fact that all the courts of the confederate princes had before this time reciprocally communicated their intentions; so that the course which each was to follow was settled, and all that was waited

for was a favourable opportunity for taking it without compromising themselves.

The Saxon army, which was encamped with ours, was secretly tampered with, and manifested a most hostile disposition. None were faithful but the Poles. They remained, as they had always been, ready to shed their blood for him to whom they were attached.

The official persons whose duty it was to keep a vigilant eye on these political relations are to blame for allowing themselves to be deceived, or culpable for not discovering the painful truth, and announcing the danger. But they were in the habit of intrenching themselves behind the Emperor. He was the remedy and the consolation for every thing: nobody assisted him: he was obliged to think and act for all around him.

However, a few days before the battle he perceived all the unfavourable chances which fighting it presented. But then it was scarcely possible to avoid it. The enemy's army was so near, that a march in retreat must have been very difficult, though its consequences would not have been equal to those which followed the fatal battle of Leipsic. But it is not easy to derange the plan of operations of a whole army, and make it act in a way directly opposite to that which had been projected. It would have required, too, a pause of some days to make the attempt, at least to withdraw the force left on the Elbe; but the hours which fate now allowed us were numbered. I was not with the army, and have not a perfect knowledge of the incidents and details of the battle of Leipsic, the consequences of which proved so immense. The Emperor had taken a position in front of the town, with the intention of acting on the offensive as soon as the enemy should be sufficiently near to facilitate the execution of his plan, which required rapid and decisive movements. But besides that the incidents which I have related made a great difference between what he meant to undertake, and what it became possible to execute, he experienced also the disadvantage of being anticipated in the attack.

The day before this decisive battle a very sanguinary action was fought, which completed the destruction of Marshal Ney's corps. The troops fought with their accustomed valour; but that degree of spirit which is necessary to sustain the most heroic courage was exhausted. Finally, the event which succeeded produced their total decomposition. The army did its duty; but it was overwhelmed by numbers, and more especially by a prodigious quantity of artillery. The practice of using great masses of artillery was introduced on our part in the war of 1809, when, in consequence of the mediocrity of the new levies, we were obliged to make up for the inferior quality of the troops by an increased number of pieces of cannon. To such an extent had our artillery been augmented, that in the battle of Wagram we had seven hundred and fifty-six cannon, including the pieces in position employed to protect the passage of the Danube.*

Our allied enemies having been long accustomed to imitate the Emperor in every thing, made great efforts to increase their artillery. Following his example, they had learned to adapt foreign artillery to their use, and to avail themselves of it on the field of battle; and at Leipsic the quantity of artillery which the three powers brought into action surpassed any thing which imagination might previously have conceived.

The great use of this terrible weapon renders battles in general more decisive; but when well supported by a powerful cavalry, as was the artillery of the allies, it renders victory certain, especially when there is an opportunity of engaging with a double force an enemy with a river behind him, which was the situation of the French army at the battle of Leipsic.

In an affair which took place on the eve of the battle, on the day before, the Austrian General Meerfeldt was made prisoner. The Emperor received him where he bivouacked,

* I have this fact from General Lariboissiere, who commanded the artillery of the army in 1809.

and after a long conversation, dismissed him with pacific propositions. But it was too late; our enemies were conscious of their strength, and saw that fortune had abandoned us. They had no longer reason to fear a reverse, particularly Russia, into whose hands all the powers of Germany had thrown themselves. By a victory they might win the world, while the loss of a battle would, in consequence of their great superiority in numbers, be to them unimportant.

If the corps left on the Elbe had been with the Emperor, there is no doubt that he would have abandoned Germany. A series of unfortunate incidents had however placed him under the necessity of playing a desperate game, to the hazards of which he never exposed himself during the brilliant period of his glory.

The enemy attacked our army on the 18th of October, I believe, in front of Leipsic. The fire was murderous, and prodigies of valour were performed on both sides. But the behaviour of the French troops is truly astonishing, as the oldest corps among them were the cohorts of the national guards, which had only been made moveable and brought into the field since the month of March. The cavalry was entirely composed of recruits. The men and the horses were equally raw and undisciplined. No part of our army was in a good state except the artillery. Nevertheless, whatever might be the advantage derived from the use of this weapon, the army could not have resisted the vigorous attacks made upon it had it not been for the presence of the Emperor, who showed himself every where.

The allies were so numerous, that they scarcely perceived the losses they sustained. Their masses pressed down upon us in every direction; and it was impossible that victory could fail to be with them. Their success, however, would have been less decisive, had it not been for the defection of the Saxons. In the midst of the battle, these troops having moved towards the enemy, as if intending to make an attack,

turned suddenly round, and opened a heavy fire of artillery and musketry on the columns by the side of which they had a few moments before been fighting. I do not know in what page of history such a transaction is recorded. This event immediately produced a great difference in our affairs, which were before in a bad enough train. I ought here to mention, that before the battle the Emperor dismissed a Bavarian division, which still remained with him. He spoke to the officers in terms which will not soon be effaced from their memory. He told them, that, "according to the laws of war, they were his prisoners, since their government had taken part against him; but that he could not forget the services they had rendered him, and that they were therefore at liberty to return home." These troops left the army, where they were much esteemed, and marched for Bavaria.

The desertion of the Saxons to the enemy obliged the Emperor to order movements to which he would not otherwise have resorted, especially in so warm an action. These unexpected movements caused disorder, when that calmness and that cool determination by which so much may be done at the decisive moment of a battle, were most wanting. It was now necessary to think of a retreat, which had indeed already begun, in consequence of the physical and moral exhaustion of the troops, which had maintained the contest since the morning under marked disadvantages.

The enemy soon perceived that our troops were retiring; but his attacks were not relaxed. The bridge of Leipsic was the only passage whereby the retreat could be effected; and it is inconceivable how the staff of the army could have neglected to build other bridges. Their construction would have been quite easy, as in such a town as Leipsic materials and workmen would have been found in abundance, if the artificers of the army had been insufficient.

The Prince de Neufchatel declared that he had directed bridges to be prepared; the artillery and engineer depart-

ments asserted that they had received no orders. Whether the neglect was in the issuing or the execution of the orders, the consequences were not the less disastrous.

After nearly the whole of the left and part of the centre had passed the Elster, the Emperor himself crossed. He desired the artillery-officer who had charge of the bridge, for the destruction of which preparation had been made, not to leave the spot, and not to put the match to the train until all the troops had passed over.

At first, the corps proceeded along the bridge without any disagreeable accident; but such was the disorder, that no one could tell whether or not his column was the last which had to pass. The enemy's sharp-shooters were in advance; the pressure towards the bridge was great, and the confusion became extreme.

The officer left in charge of the bridge not knowing what was the state of things on the enemy's side, ran towards a general-officer to learn, if possible, from him how far the passage had been effected; but he was carried away by the crowd, and could not return. The artillery-men who were under his command, seeing German troops and cossacks pushing forward, blew up the bridge without waiting for orders; and thus the right of the army, which kept the enemy's masses in check, was cut off.

The report of this unfortunate event soon spread through the ranks. The right was in its turn thrown into disorder, and an escape was sought through fields and marshes. This completed the disaster: the troops were made prisoners of war; and Generals Lauriston and Reynier were taken with them. Prince Joseph Poniatowski, recently made marshal of France, had just at this moment gained the banks of the Elster. Though wounded, consulting only his courage, he plunged on horseback into the river, where he unfortunately perished. It was impossible to be more brave than was this prince:—impetuous, magnanimous, and always amiable, he

was as much esteemed by those against whom he combated, as regretted by the party whom he served.

Thus terminated the fatal day of Leipsic: the result of which to France was the loss of a fine and numerous army, and all her allies.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The King of Saxony's situation—Part taken by Bernadotte in the defection of the Saxons—State of public opinion—Various measures—Murat and his intrigues at his departure—General von Wrede—Battle of Hanau—Irruption of cossacks to Cassel—Arrival of our troops at Mentz—Deplorable state of affairs, and public opinion.

THE King of Saxony remained at Leipsic: the Emperor waited on him to bid him adieu, and expressed his sincere regret at having involved him in his bad fortune. The situation of the King of Saxony was a very painful one, inasmuch as he was exposed to the resentment of other sovereigns who had pursued a line of conduct less honourable than his. The Saxon army deserted from our ranks, and entered those of our enemy: that was done without his order or participation. His name was, however, made use of to seduce the troops. They were told that the King had joined the alliance against France, and that the French were carrying him off. Russia neglected no paltry artifice of this kind to destroy the influence of France over the armies of the German princes. But of all the members of the coalition, he who resorted to the most unworthy means was Bernadotte. He had commanded the Saxons when he was one of our generals, and he availed himself of the advantages which this circumstance afforded to deceive them.—Correspondence, proclamations, were actively employed, and no kind of seduction was spared.

After the defeat at Leipsic, which was truly destructive, there remained no other course for the Emperor to take but to retire to the banks of the Rhine. The army took the road by Erfurth, Gotha, Fulda, and Hanau; but provisions were every where deficient. This unfortunate circumstance put an end to all order among the troops. I know not how this neglect could have occurred, but all the expense which had been laid out on the magazines was completely lost. The army, finding no means of subsistence in the villages situated on its route, spread over the country in quest of provisions. The consequence was a complete disorganization of the army. It was no longer any thing more than a confused multitude, pursued by the enemy's light troops, and flying as it were by instinct to the frontier.

In passing through Erfurth, the Emperor left a garrison there to retard the pursuit, and to oblige the enemy to make a circuit to gain the road to Hanau, whither our army was marching.

The deplorable state of our affairs was soon known at Paris. It was a heavy blow to the public, as it destroyed all the hopes which had been cherished of happiness and repose. At Paris we were informed of the defection of Bavaria, even before the Emperor knew it; and what is more, we obtained the first intelligence of the march of the Bavarian and Austrian army, under the command of the Bavarian General von Wrede, for whom the Emperor had shown so much regard in the preceding campaigns. He arrived by forced marches at Hanau, before our columns, with the design of giving the finishing stroke to the French army, which had so generously combated for the independence of his country; and which had, at the same time, laid the foundation of his glory and his private fortune. He who is really ungrateful, is never so by halves. He was not satisfied with making his country revolt against France; he wished to give a death-blow to our remaining force. In one day the Bavarians became the most

implacable of our enemies. They forgot that if, instead of combating for their independence, the Emperor had been disposed to sacrifice them to Austria, he would have extinguished all the resentments of that power, and removed all future cause of dispute.

The moral influence of the allies was prodigiously increased by the battle of Leipsic; while their physical force was augmented by the Bavarians and the Wirtemburghers, and by troops of all the other German states.

The war-minister still served the Emperor with great zeal. He estimated the danger to which the army was exposed, and very judiciously sent all the troops which could be collected to Mentz. At the same time, he proposed to the Empress, who presided in the council of ministers, to raise and promptly organise the national guards of Lorraine, Alsace, the banks of the Rhine, and Franche-Comté. This proposition was adopted, but a thousand difficulties impeded its execution; because the arsenals were almost empty, the arms having been sent to Poland before the disastrous winter of 1812, where they fell into the hands of the enemy.

It was easy to perceive the difficulties which were to be encountered in supplying the wants of the army. The position which the Bavarians had taken intercepted the Emperor's communications with France, and consequently conjectures supplied the place of facts; and when gloomy ideas get into the mind, there are no limits to the forebodings of the imagination. Consternation was general. Nothing was foreseen but misfortunes; and they were not slow in arriving.

An anecdote, which deserves a place in history, remains to be told; and this seems to be the proper time for relating it.

For some time the police established at Rome had been sending information that, according to reports received from Naples, the government of that country had listened to propositions made by the English, and was preparing to join the coalition. Absurd as such a report appeared, it was circu-

lated with so many details and circumstances, that it was difficult to refuse belief to the existence of some intercourse between the Neapolitan minister and the agents of the British government. It followed then that the King of Naples, who commanded the cavalry in the Emperor's army, must have given secret instructions for opening these negotiations, or that he had no objection to the Queen-regent opening them in his absence. In whatever way the business was managed, such a proceeding was not the less blameable; as the enemy must have concluded that the Emperor's affairs were indeed in a most desperate state, when the King of Naples was deserting him. This transaction was considered so criminal in France, that public opinion revolted against it. At first nobody seemed disposed to believe that any such thing had happened, as the King of Naples had the reputation of a brave and candid man. However, nothing was more true, as will presently be seen.

While the reports of the Neapolitan negotiations were gaining strength at Rome, where they destroyed public confidence, I received an account from Florence of the passage of a Neapolitan of high consideration, the Duke of Rocca-Romana, grand equerry of the court, through that city, on his way to meet the King at the army.

On comparing the period of the Duke's journey through the French departments beyond the Alps with the date of the Neapolitan defection, it plainly appears that he was the messenger employed on the occasion; and that the only object of his mission was to inform the King that every thing was prepared, and that nothing was wanted but his presence.

This messenger passed through Lyons, and proceeding by the route of Strasburgh and Mentz, fell in with the army beyond Hanau, through which town he passed before it was occupied by the Bavarians. He found the King of Naples at Eisnach, where his head-quarters were; and on the report which the King received, he took his departure with the

greatest precipitation. Was he ordered to go to the outposts to facilitate the march of the army, as the great difficulty of the retreat was no longer doubtful?—or was he keeping himself at a distance from the imperial head-quarters to find an opportunity for escape; either because he dreaded that the Emperor might obtain information of his projects, or because he thought it then advisable to withdraw himself completely from his observation? I cannot tell; but I learned almost at the same moment, the passage of the Duke of Rocca-Romana through Mentz, and the departure of the King of Naples from the army. He travelled through Mentz, Strasburgh, to the Alps, which he crossed by the way of the Simplon.

He had thus the good fortune to pass through Hanau before the arrival of the Bavarian van-guard, which almost immediately after intercepted that road. In consequence of this state of things, it happened that the Emperor had no opportunity to read the details sent to him on this subject until it was too late.

The hasty journey of the King of Naples through France created general surprise. The first idea excited by it was, that the Emperor had commissioned him to assemble his army, and form a junction with the force under the Viceroy, in order to protect Italy from an invasion, which appeared to be contemplated, and the execution of which was at that time rendered probable, by the movements of the English troops in Sicily. Nobody attributed the return of the King of Naples to any other object; but this conjecture was far from the truth.

Joachim passed through Turin, Florence, and Rome, without dropping a word which could betray his project. Neither the Prince of Borghese, who governed Piedmont, nor the Princes of Lucca, who governed Tuscany, had the slightest idea of his views. He was still less suspected at Rome, where General Miolis commanded. The arrival of the King

of Naples was quickly followed by a new danger for Italy, where he soon after commenced hostilities against the French troops.

About the same time the defection of Westphalia took place. The misfortunes which the army had experienced rendered that event inevitable; but hastened as it was, by a sudden irruption of cossacks, it produced a very disagreeable impression in France, as it was a proof of the Emperor being abandoned by all his allies. We were prepared for the loss of Westphalia; but it was not imagined that the mere appearance of some light troops would be sufficient to bring it about. The following is the short history of this event:—

While the Emperor's army was still before Leipsic, a corps of cossacks passed the Elbe below Magdeburg, marched through Hanover, and advanced with great rapidity to Cassel, where the King of Westphalia still was.

Such was the idea of the security which existed at the time, that the Russian general, who commanded the cossacks, arrived quite unexpectedly at the spot where the Westphalian artillery used to exercise the guns. Some pieces and their ammunition which were there were supposed to be perfectly safe, on account of their vicinity to the capital; but they were carried off to Cassel, through which the cossacks passed at full gallop.

On the first alarm every one fled. The King was obliged to withdraw; but he was faithfully accompanied by his guards. He proceeded only to a short distance from the capital, where he was soon informed of the force of the corps which had attacked him.

The infantry of the garrison had shut themselves up in the citadel; but the enemy was obliged to retire almost as soon as he had entered. That however did not much advance the affairs of the King of Westphalia, who was obliged to follow the movement of the grand army, and to place himself behind the Rhine, which he passed at Bonn, or Cologne. His

guards followed him to the banks of the river, and there he bade them farewell. The greater part returned to Cassel: the rest repaired to their homes. The King and Queen proceeded to Paris, accompanied by the persons who had attached themselves to their destiny.

Several days had passed without any news being received from the Emperor. We had learned nothing since the communication was intercepted by the taking of Hanau. He was offended at the conduct of the Bavarian government; and his dissatisfaction was greatly aggravated, when he recollected how badly he had been served with respect to foreign information. He received almost at the same time the news of the arrival of General von Wrede's corps at Hanau, and a report from his minister at Munich, stating that Bavaria would remain faithful to the alliance, notwithstanding his ill fortune. What must appear still more extraordinary is, that the letter of the French minister at Munich was dated on the very day on which the treaty concluded at Ried* was signed; in virtue of which the Bavarian and Austrian troops were united, and marched to the banks of the Rhine.

It is obvious that the French minister must have drawn up his report very inconsiderately, or have been singularly deceived; for he was too honourable a man to be suspected of treachery.

The advanced-guard of the army retreating from Leipsic debouched by the road from Fulda to Hanau, where it fell in with the Bavarians, who had been there for several days in position. They were not dealt with gently; on the contrary, they were attacked with great fury: and the French soldiers showed no mercy to those who fell into their hands. They were filled with indignation at seeing troops, for whom they had fought in 1805 and 1809, so perfidiously turning their arms against them.

* Ried is an Austrian village, four leagues beyond Braunau, on the frontier of Austria and Bavaria.

The passage was soon opened. The Bavarian army took the road of the Maine; and we did not choose to lose, in its pursuit, that time which was so valuable for securing the retreat of the grand army. The march was accelerated as much as possible; and this multitude, which had more the appearance of a mob than an army, was at last conducted to Mentz. The dispersion of the soldiers from the different regiments was at its height; and, to increase the misfortune, the commissariat, accustomed to reckon on success, had established no magazines at Mentz. This rendered it necessary to distribute the army through the villages, and to quarter the soldiers on the inhabitants. This measure, which would have been very proper if the different corps had been reorganised, had, on this occasion, a disastrous result, inasmuch as it retarded the rallying of the scattered soldiers. Reverses, fatigue, and privations, had so broken down their spirits, that they were indifferent to every thing. They stopped at the first places they came to, and fixed themselves there. How much it is to be regretted that supplies of all descriptions were not formed at Mentz, where the army could have been concentrated within a space sufficiently limited to admit of the troops being frequently inspected and supplied with provisions. We should then undoubtedly have succeeded in restoring order, and making this disorganised force reassume a respectable attitude; instead of which, the dispersion of the soldiers rendered the activity of the general almost useless. His orders, for the most part, were left unexecuted; and the state of the army, far from improving, grew worse. Contagious diseases spread amongst the troops, and completed their ruin. Never had the French army presented so melancholy a picture. Peace was loudly called for, as the only means of obtaining the necessary time to remedy so many evils; but we shall see how difficult it was to conclude peace.

The Emperor had arrived at Mentz. His heart was rent by the state of affairs; but he reproached nobody. His

situation was dreadful. He had an advanced guard at Hockheim, on the right bank of the Rhine; a garrison in Dantzic, at the mouth of the Vistula; one in each of the fortresses of Stettin, Custrin, and I believe also in Glogau on the Oder; and one in Spandau, near Berlin.

On the Elbe he had, as I have already stated, thirty thousand men in Dresden; about eighteen thousand in Torgau; five or six thousand in Wittemberg; about ten thousand in Magdeburg; and thirty thousand in Hamburgh. He had also left four or five thousand in Erfurt on leaving that place.

All these garrisons would have given him a fresh army, if he had gained the battle of Leipsic. He lost it; and these troops not only became useless, but their absence added to the ruin of his affairs. The system of war had changed since the armies brought into the field had become so numerous. Regular sieges were discarded. A fortress was blockaded by light troops, who waited quietly till the garrison had eaten its last bushel of flour. In the mean time, the great armies acted offensively against each other; and that of the two which gained the last battle made a Charlemagne.

CHAPTER XIX.

Measures of defence—The Empress in the senate—Overtures of the allies—Artifices of Metternich—Fine movement—How it failed.

SUCH were the afflicting results of the battle of Leipsic; the consequences of which could never have been to our enemies, if they had lost the day, what they became to us.

I have already said that, before the engagement, the Emperor had a presentiment of what would happen. He even foresaw that if he gained the battle, there would not remain

to him sufficient means to give to his success the results capable of securing peace. This was his reason for wishing France to display new strength in proportion to the enormous mass of enemies whom adversity had united against us. With this view he sent an order to the Empress regent to convoke the senate extraordinarily, and to go there and make an exposition of the misfortunes with which France was menaced by the defection of all her allies. The Empress spoke to that assembly in a dignified and elevated tone, which gave to her youth a lustre still greater than that which it derived from her high rank and birth. She felt deeply for the misfortunes of a country which she had freely adopted. She thought that each individual Frenchman was bound to think nothing of any sacrifices which could prevent the ruin of the national edifice.

She was listened to attentively, and inspired every body with the most lively interest for her. She departed from the hall of the senate amidst the most respectful enthusiasm of the whole assembly. M. Regnault St.-Jean d'Angely, whose indefatigable zeal was commensurate with his talents, developed the motives of the policy of the government in requiring a new levy of men. The pressing danger did not permit of any reflection. The proposal was approved, because the impossibility of carrying it into effect was less considered than the imperious necessity of refusing nothing whatever that might preserve the territory from an invasion, against which it was almost without defence. Besides, it was no longer a question of making conquests, but of guarding ourselves against conquest in our turn.

This appeal of the Empress to the senate was made before the arrival of the army at Mentz, and consequently before it had experienced the losses which rendered the retreat necessary; so that the first reflection which occurred with respect to this levy was, that it would not be sufficient, and that before long a second would infallibly be necessary to place the

army in the state into which it had been wished to bring it before the fortune of arms was tried at Leipsic. This idea agonised all hearts: confidence disappeared: the future no longer afforded the prospect of consolation, and men's minds were filled with all sorts of conjectures respecting the changes which it was foreseen must take place in consequence of inability to prevent them.

There is no doubt that peace was the general desire. Peace of any kind would have satisfied the country; but it did not enter into the thought of any person to sacrifice him from whom the national love and gratitude were not completely detached.

The progress of events produced successive changes in those dispositions. I shall give an account of them in the order in which they occurred. As soon as I was informed of the Emperor's arrival at Mentz, I transmitted to him a description of the gloomy appearances which I perceived around me; and I urged him to come to Paris and give impulse to that national movement without which there was no chance of safety.

Time was flying fast; and malevolence added to depression would have operated more powerfully than any impulse that could have been given from Mentz. The Emperor arrived in Paris at the beginning of November, attended by all who had followed him to the army.

A circumstance which occurred almost immediately after the Emperor's arrival, for a moment suspended the gloomy anticipations which had taken possession of the public mind. The French minister to the Duke of Saxe Weimar was seized by a detachment of the enemy's troops, who violated the residence of the Duke. He was sent to Toeplitz, then conveyed back to the head-quarters of the allies, and then summoned to M. de Metternich, with whom he had a long conversation, of which he rendered an account on his return.

"After having been," said M. de Saint-Aignan, in his re-

port, "treated during two days like a prisoner of war at Weimar, where the Emperors of Austria and Russia had fixed their head-quarters, I received orders to set out for Bohemia with a convoy of prisoners. Hitherto I had seen nobody, nor made any remonstrance, conceiving that the title with which I was invested ought to be a sufficient protection. Besides, I had already protested against the treatment to which I was subjected. However, I now thought it advisable to write to Prince Schwartzenberg and Count Metternich to represent the impropriety of the proceeding. Prince Schwartzenberg immediately sent to me his aide-de-camp, Count Paar, to apologise for the mistake that had been committed, and to invite me either to his residence or to that of Count Metternich. I proceeded immediately to the latter, because Prince Schwartzenberg was not at home. Prince Metternich received me with the most marked politeness. He made some allusion to my situation, from which he took upon himself to relieve me, esteeming himself happy, he said, to render me this service, and at the same time to testify the Emperor of Austria's esteem for the Duke of Vicenza. He then spoke of the congress, though I had said nothing that could lead to that turn of the conversation. 'We sincerely wish for peace,' said he, 'and we are ready to conclude it. The thing is, to set about the business openly and straightforwardly. The coalition will continue united. Any indirect means which the Emperor Napoleon may employ to attain peace will never be attended by any result. Let all parties explain themselves clearly, one to another, and then, possibly, peace may be concluded.' After this conversation Count Metternich informed me that I must proceed to Toeplitz, where I should soon hear from him, and that he hoped to see me on my return. On the 27th of October I set out for Toeplitz, where I arrived on the 30th. On the 2nd of November I received a letter from Count Metternich, in consequence of which I quitted Toeplitz on the 3rd, and repaired

to the head-quarters of the Emperor of Austria at Frankfort, where I arrived on the 8th. I waited on Count Metternich that day. He spoke to me of the success of the allied armies; of the revolution that was taking place in Germany, and of the necessity of making peace. He told me that the allies, long before the declaration of Austria, had greeted the Emperor Francis with the title of Emperor of Germany; that he had refused that insignificant title; *but that Germany in that way belonged to him more than before.* M. Metternich wished Napoleon to be convinced that the greatest impartiality and moderation prevailed in the councils of the allied powers; but that they felt themselves strong in proportion to their moderation. That *none of them entertained designs against the dynasty of the Emperor Napoleon;* that England was much more moderate than was supposed; and that there never was a more favourable moment for treating with that power: that if the Emperor Napoleon really wished to conclude a lasting peace, he would spare a great deal of misery to mankind, and danger to France, by no longer retarding the negotiations: that the allies were ready to come to an understanding: that the conditions on which they proposed to conclude peace were of a nature to keep England within equitable bounds, and to insure to France by sea all the freedom to which the other European powers could pretend: that England was willing to make to Holland, as an independent state, many concessions which she would not make to that country as a province of the French empire: that what M. de Meerfeldt had been instructed to say on the part of the Emperor Napoleon might give rise to several declarations, which he would beg of me to report accurately and without any change whatever: that though the Emperor Napoleon would not think of a balance of power in Europe, yet that balance was not only possible but necessary: that it had been proposed at Dresden to take, by way of compensation, different territories which the Emperor no longer pos-

sessed; as, for example, the Duchy of Warsaw; and that similar compensations might be stipulated at present. Count Metternich requested that I would call on him on the evening of the 9th. I accordingly went, and I arrived just as he had returned from the palace of the Emperor of Austria, from whom he gave me a letter to the Empress Maria Louisa. Count Metternich told me that he immediately expected Count Nesselrode, in whose presence he would communicate what he wished me to announce to the Emperor. He directed me to inform the Duke de Vicenza that he still cherished for him those sentiments of esteem which his excellent character had always inspired. In a few moments Count Nesselrode arrived. He briefly repeated to me what Count Metternich had already said respecting the mission which I was requested to undertake. He added, that M. de Hardenberg might be considered as present, and acceding to all that had been said. Here M. de Metternich explained the intentions of the allies in the way in which I was to report them to the Emperor. When he had concluded, I replied, that as my part was that of a listener and not a speaker, all I had to do was to report literally word for word what had fallen from him; and that, to insure accuracy, I requested permission to write it down, merely for my own use, and that I would submit my memorandum to his examination. Count Nesselrode proposed that I should prepare this memorandum immediately; upon which Count Metternich conducted me to another apartment, where I wrote as follows.* Having concluded, I returned to the apartment where I had left Messrs.

* M. de Saint Aignan's Memorandum.

"Count Metternich observed that the circumstance which had brought me to head-quarters might be turned to advantage, by charging me to convey to his Majesty the Emperor the reply to the proposals which he had caused to be made through the medium of Count Meerfeldt. Consequently, Count Metternich and Count Nesselrode requested me to announce to his Majesty that the allied powers were united by indissoluble bonds, which rendered them all-powerful, and which they were determined never to renounce. That in conformity with the engagements they had contracted, they had come to the resolution of not concluding

Metternich and Nesselrode. On my entrance, Count Metternich said, "Here is Lord Aberdeen, the English ambassador. As his intentions coincide with ours, we may continue our conversation in his presence." He then requested me to read what I had written. When I came to the article concerning England, Lord Aberdeen appeared not to understand it. I read it a second time, and he then observed, that *the freedom of trade and the right of navigation* were very vague expressions. I replied that I had written what M. de Metternich had instructed me to communicate. M. de Metternich observed that these expressions might certainly embarrass the question, and that it would be better to substitute others in their stead. He took the pen and wrote —*that England*

any but a general peace. That at the time of the congress of Prague a continental peace was still possible, because circumstances did not afford sufficient time for coming to an understanding on the subject of another negotiation; but that the intentions of the allied powers and of England had since been declared; and that, consequently, it would be useless to think of an armistice or a negotiation, the object of which was not a general peace. That the allied sovereigns on the subject of power and preponderance are unanimously of opinion *that France ought to be preserved integral and within her natural limits, the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees.* That the independence of Germany was a sine-qua-non condition; and that, consequently, France must renounce, not the influence which every great state necessarily exercises over a less powerful one, but all kind of sovereignty over Germany. That his Majesty had himself laid down as a principle, that the great states ought to be separated by weaker ones. That in the direction of the Pyrenees, the independence of Spain, and the restoration of the ancient dynasty, were also a sine-qua-non condition. That in Italy Austria must obtain a frontier which would become one of the subjects of the negotiation. That Piedmont, as well as the Italian state, presented several lines that might become subjects of negotiation, provided that Italy and Germany were governed independently of France and every other great power. That Holland should also be an object of negotiation, always setting out from the principle that that state should be free. That England was disposed to make the greatest sacrifices to secure a peace founded on these bases, and to recognise the freedom of trade and navigation which France is entitled to demand. That if his Majesty *would adopt these bases of a general peace, some town conveniently situated on the right bank of the Rhine should be declared neutral, and there the plenipotentiaries of all the belligerent powers would assemble, the progress of the events of the war not being suspended by the negotiations.*

would make the greatest sacrifices for a peace founded on these bases (those mentioned above). I remarked that these expressions were no less vague than those which had been cancelled. Lord Aberdeen was of the same opinion. He said it would be better to restore what I had first written; and again repeated the assurance that England was ready to make the greatest sacrifices; that she possessed much, and would restore liberally. The remainder of the memorandum being found conformable with the communication that had been made to me, the conversation turned on indifferent subjects.

"Prince Schwartzenberg now entered, and we went through the whole business again. Count Nesselrode, who left the room for a moment during the conversation, on his return, charged me on the part of the Emperor Alexander to inform the Duke de Vicenza that his Majesty would never change his opinion of his character and good faith; and that if he were appointed as the negotiator, every thing would be speedily arranged. I was to set out next morning, the 10th of November; but Prince Schwartzenberg requested that I would wait until the evening, as he had not yet had time to write to the Prince de Neufchatel. In the course of the night, Count Woyna, Prince Schwartzenberg's aide-de-camp, brought me the leter, and conducted me to the advanced-posts. On the morning of the 11th I arrived at Mentz."

Thus we were to relinquish all that remained of our conquests; to sanction the consequences which our reverses had entailed; to surrender Italy; to evacuate Holland; and all this for obtaining, not peace, but the opening of negotiations, which would not protect France against the ravages which threatened her. No propositions could be more unacceptable and suspicious. Yet they were not rejected. They were transmitted on the 15th of October; and on the 16th, M. de Bassano replied, that *a peace founded on the independence of all nations*, both in the continental point of view, and in that

of maritime relations, had always been the object of the Emperor's wishes; and that he assented to the meeting of a congress at Manheim. But the political horizon was now changed: the reply was not thought sufficiently clear and precise; the cabinet of the Tuileries did not admit distinctly enough the bases which had been proposed. This was merely playing with words; but circumstances were too serious to admit of any remonstrance. The Duke de Vicenza, who succeeded the Duke de Bassano, reiterated the concurrence in the terms required by Metternich. New difficulties then arose. The sovereigns were not all at Frankfort; and the negotiations could not be opened until their determination was known.

The Emperor severely felt the deception that was practised upon him. But every thing conspired against us. An epidemic had broken out among our troops. Fatigue, privation, and, above all, depression of spirits, had generated disease in our cantonments. Our hospitals were filled; and our troops, whose courage was undaunted before the enemy, could not bear up against disappointment and want. Every day produced a diminution of those ranks, which the sword had already frightfully thinned. Things were going on no better in Spain. Marshal Soult had taken the command of the army beaten at Vittoria. Having by great efforts succeeded in reorganising it, he resolved to make a bold attempt to mend our fortune beyond the Pyrenees.

The English and Spanish army, which had advanced on the Bidassoa, was blockading Pampeluna with a division, while, at the same time, the bulk of its force was pressing the siege of Saint Sebastian. Marshal Soult very wisely determined to take advantage of these circumstances, and to cut off the division. He marched by the left, and arrived before Pampeluna, while Wellington was yet under the walls of Saint Sebastian. The attack commenced; and Marshal Soult's well-contrived plan would have been crowned with success, had not a deluge of rain, which descended on the mountains,

forced him to recall his columns. The English were not impeded by the same obstacles. They had no defiles or ravines to pass; and they arrived at a quick march, just when we were ready to resume our operation. Another misfortune intervened. Marshal Soult had ordered General Drouet (who commanded an intermediate position, from whence he kept in check an English corps under General Picton,) to march and join him, concealing his movement. Precisely the contrary ensued. The English corps commanded by General Picton rejoined that of Lord Wellington before Pampeluna, at the moment when Marshal Soult was attacking it; and General Drouet did not appear until all was over. The corps which Drouet was to keep in check penetrated Marshal Soult's right flank, and obliged him to retreat with a considerable loss. The mischief was now irreparable. The troops commanded by Drouet were thrown into disorder; and there remained no alternative but a speedy retreat, in the course of which every sort of privation was suffered.

The English army being once concentrated before the walls of Pampeluna, there remained no possibility of intercepting its line of operations. But even after the concentration was effected, Marshal Soult would yet have succeeded in relieving the fortress, had he been joined by General Drouet, as he hoped to be, at least when General Picton's corps appeared on the field of battle. This attempt not having been successfully followed up, Pampeluna capitulated, and we lost our last strong hold in that part of Spain.

This unfortunate event could not have happened more untimely. It extinguished all remaining hope of extricating ourselves from the fatal situation into which we had been plunged by an extraordinary succession of reverses. Another and not less serious consequence of Marshal Soult's failure was, that it greatly contributed to change the disposition which the allies had manifested through the medium of M. de Saint-Aignan. The Duke de Bassano was blamed for not

having accepted, in their fullest extent, the bases that were proposed. This was unjust. The draught of the letter which he wrote on the 16th of November to M. de Metternich contained, in conformity with the intention originally manifested by the Emperor, the explicit acceptance of the bases of Frankfort. This part of the letter was suppressed, as is evident on an attentive perusal of the document.* This omission was purposely made. Napoleon, who had ascertained at Prague the degree of confidence due to the allies when they spoke of peace, conceived that they might easily disavow what had been said in a confidential conversation to an individual who had no mission and no special character; and that it would be more advisable to induce them to give official consistency to their propositions. Accordingly, his minister proposed to send M. de Saint-Aignan back to Frankfort, with authority to make and sign in the Emperor's name a declara-

* "To Count Metternich.

"Paris, November , 1813.

"Sir,

"Baron de Saint-Aignan arrived here at noon; and he announced that, according to the communications made by your Excellency, England acceded to the proposition relative to the opening of a congress for a general peace; and that the powers propose to declare neutral a town on the right bank of the Rhine for the meeting of the plenipotentiaries. His Majesty wishes that town to be Manheim. The Duke de Vicenza, whom he appoints his plenipotentiary, will proceed thither as soon as your Excellency shall inform me of the day fixed by the powers for the opening of the congress. It appears proper and also conformable to custom that there should be no troops at Manheim, and that the duty should be performed by the citizens, and that an officer of the grand-duchy of Baden should be appointed to superintend the police. Should it be thought proper to have pickets of cavalry, their force should be equal on all sides. With respect to the communications of the English plenipotentiary with his government, they may be transmitted through France by the way of Calais. *A peace founded on the independence of all nations in the continental point of view, as well as in that of maritime trade,* has always been the object of the Emperor's wishes. His Majesty forms a happy presage from the report which Baron de Saint-Aignan made to him relative to the assurances of the English minister.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"The Duke de Bassano."

tion of the acceptance of the bases in the presence of the ministers by whom they had been dictated. This declaration, if it had not been eluded, would necessarily have been recognised by a written note, and the ground of the negotiation would thus have been diplomatically established; but Napoleon preferred the medium of a letter, by which the bases of the negotiation would be implicitly accepted, through the nomination of a plenipotentiary to negotiate. He knew enough of the policy of Count Metternich, which on all occasions presented a varnish of good faith, to feel assured that he would reply by a demand for the formal acceptance of the bases proposed, to which this answer would give an official and irrevocable character. "I am so convinced of this," said Napoleon to his minister, "that I would dictate his letter this very day." He did not seek, as was then reported, to gain time, since it was agreed that the negotiations should not impede the course of the military operations. The expected letter* fulfilled all the hopes to which it had given rise; for it

* "To the Duke de Bassano.

"Frankfort on the Maine, Nov. 25, 1813.

"Monsieur le Duc,

"The courier which your Excellency dispatched from Paris on the 16th, arrived here yesterday. I hasten to lay before their Imperial Majesties, and his Majesty the King of Prussia, the dispatch with which you have honoured me. Their Majesties observe with pleasure that the confidential conversation with M. de Saint-Aignan has been considered by his Majesty the Emperor of the French as a proof of the pacific intentions of the high allied powers. Animated by uniform intentions, firm in their views, and inseparable in their alliance, they are ready to enter upon the negotiation whenever they receive the assurance that his Majesty the Emperor of the French recognises the general and summary bases which I specified in my conference with Baron de Saint-Aignan. These bases are not alluded to in your Excellency's dispatch. It merely lays down a principle in which all the European powers participate, and which forms the first object of their wishes. But this principle being of too general a nature, cannot be substituted for the bases alluded to. Their Majesties, therefore, wish that his Majesty the Emperor Napoleon would declare himself on the subject of these bases, lest insurmountable difficulties should impede the negotiation at their very commencement. The allies have no objection to consent to the choice of Manheim. Its neutralisation, and the

engaged the high allied powers in the most formal way. "Their Majesties," said M. de Metternich, "are ready to enter upon the negotiation whenever they become assured that his Majesty the Emperor of the French recognises the general and summary bases which I specified in my conference with Baron de Saint-Aignan." Yet after having received the assurance he wanted, he said, in a tardy letter,* that the allied powers were *no longer ready to negotiate the general bases, and that it was necessary to consult them.*†

police regulations proposed by your Excellency, are perfectly conformable to custom, and may be adopted at all events.

"Accept, &c.

"METTERNICH."

* "To Prince Metternich.

"Paris, December 2nd, 1813.

"Prince,

"I have laid before his Majesty the letter you addressed to the Duke de Bassano. France, in accepting without restriction as the bases of peace the independence of nations both in the continental and maritime point of view, *has already recognised in principle what the allies still seem to consider wanting.* His Majesty has thereby acceded to all the consequences of that principle, the final result of which ought to be a peace founded on the equilibrium of Europe, on the recognition of the integrity of each country within its natural limits, and the total independence of the states, so that no one may pretend to dominion or supremacy under any form whatever over the rest. I, however, announce to your Excellency with the most sincere satisfaction, that I am authorised by the Emperor, my august Sovereign, to declare that his Majesty accepts the general and summary bases communicated by M. de Saint-Aignan. They will entail great sacrifices on France; but his Majesty will submit to them without hesitation, if England will thereupon furnish the means of obtaining a general peace, honourable to all parties, which, your Excellency affirms, is the wish not only of the coalesced powers, but even of England.

"Accept, &c.

"THE DUKE DE VICENZA."

† "To the Duke de Vicenza.

"Frankfort on the Maine, Dec. 10th, 1813.

"Monsieur le Duc,

"The official note dated the 2nd of December, with which your Excellency honoured me, arrived from Cassel by our advanced-posts. I lost no time in laying

The Emperor did not allow himself to be deceived by the artifices of the allies. He had been actively carrying on his preparations. If the propositions transmitted to him were sincere, the attitude which he sought to assume could have no prejudicial effect on the negotiations. Consequently he appealed to the nation to take up arms. Though this measure was demanded by imperious necessity, it afforded our enemies a pretence for receding from the intentions they had manifested in the overtures of which M. de Saint-Aignan was the bearer. They published a printed declaration,* which was extensively

it before their Majesties. They observe with pleasure that his Majesty the Emperor of the French has adopted the essential bases for the re-establishment of a state of equilibrium, and the future tranquillity of Europe. They have determined to communicate this official document to their allies without delay. Their Imperial and Royal Majesties are convinced that immediately after the reception of their answers, the negotiations will be opened. We shall hasten to communicate the circumstance to your Excellency, and to concert with you the measures which may appear best calculated for obtaining the object proposed.

"I beg, &c.

"PRINCE DE METTERNICH."

* The French government has just decreed a new levy of three hundred thousand conscripts. The preamble of the senatus-consultum conveys a provocation to the allied powers. They again find themselves called upon to publish in the face of the world the views by which they are actuated in the present war, and the principles which form the basis of their conduct, their wishes and determinations. The allied powers do not wage war against France, but against that preponderance which has been so loudly proclaimed; and which, to the misfortune of Europe and of France, the Emperor Napoleon has too long exercised beyond the limits of his empire.

Victory brought the allied armies upon the Rhine. The first use which their Imperial and Royal Majesties made of their triumph was to offer peace to his Majesty the Emperor of the French. A position strengthened by the accession of all the princes and sovereigns of Germany, had no influence on the conditions of the peace. Those conditions are founded on the independence of the French empire, as well as on the independence of the other states of Europe. The views of the powers are just in their object, generous and liberal in their application, satisfactory to all, and honourable to each.

The allied sovereigns wish to see France great, powerful, and happy; because greatness and power form one of the fundamental bases of the social edifice.

circulated. This document, which was very artfully written, described the Emperor as the eternal artificer of troubles, and a tyrant, who answered overtures of peace by conscription-levies. It was endeavoured to disconnect him from France, by announcing that war was made against him and not against France. The people were cajoled with the hope of not losing any of their conquests. Their vanity was flattered by being told that a nation does not forfeit her claims on the esteem of her rivals, or cease to be great for having in her turn experienced misfortunes.

They wish that France should be happy, that French commerce should revive, and that the arts, those blessings of peace, should flourish; because a great people can only be tranquil in proportion as they are happy. The powers secure to the French empire an extent of territory which France never possessed under her kings; for a valiant nation must not fall because she has in her turn experienced reverses in an obstinate and sanguinary conflict, in which she fought with her accustomed courage.

But the powers also wish to be themselves happy and tranquil. They wish for a state of peace, which, by a wise partition of strength and a just equilibrium, shall henceforth protect their subjects against the numberless calamities which, during the last twenty years, have visited Europe.

The allied powers will not lay down their arms until they have obtained this great and beneficial result, the noble object of their efforts. They will not lay down their arms until the political condition of Europe shall be re-established, until immutable principles shall resume their ascendancy over vain pretensions, and the sanctity of treaties shall at length have secured a solid peace to Europe.

CHAPTER XX.

Alexander refuses to cross the Rhine—The communication which determines him to do so—Artifices of the allied powers— Deficiency of resources—The Legislative Body—State of public feeling—History will decide—Insurrection in Holland—The King of Naples.

THE tone of sincerity so artfully infused into this specious document, could not fail to make dupes in a country where it appeared no refuge against the impending danger was to be found.

However, the Emperor of Russia refused to go farther. France was humbled: he had attained his object, and he was unwilling to incur new chances, which could only turn to the advantage of England. But the conspiracy of the interior was already plotting at Frankfort. In that town it was represented by a man who is celebrated for the misfortunes which he drew upon his country, and for the inquietude which he disseminated from St. Petersburg to Paris. He had unavailingly employed his last remnant of influence; and his solicitations had procured only the positive declaration, that the Rhine would not be crossed. But an incident arose which changed this resolution. Switzerland corresponded with a disturber, who, though loaded with the Emperor's favour, sought only his ruin. To this man Napoleon had dispatched his secretary. He conducted him to Alexander, to whom he delivered up the cipher, and the information brought by the emissary. It was so detailed and precise, that the autocrat no longer hesitated.

This was in the month of December. The Legislative Body had been convoked; and, as the climax of misfortune, the opening of the session was postponed for several weeks. In the interim, the deputies of that assembly were fatally influenced by the lamentations which filled the capital. They set

off for the departments, where they lost their little remaining energy; and they returned to Paris only to fill up the measure of embarrassment and ruin, so that anxiety and mischievous reports completely annihilated public spirit. The declaration of Frankfort reached Paris, where it found persons credulous enough to place faith in its promises. We very readily believe in the reality of what we hope. People gradually persuaded themselves of the sincerity of the allies, who were no longer looked upon as the enemies of France. Praise was even bestowed on their magnanimity; and they obtained credit for a degree of moderation, which our own generals were reproached for having wanted.

The Emperor struggled alone against this fatal blindness. He had too much knowledge of human nature to be duped by the artifices of his enemies. But the interest which he was supposed to have in opposing them, prevented him from recovering that confidence which ought never to have been withdrawn from him. He sometimes complained to those about him, and used to say, "You see, gentlemen, what it is to believe in punic faith;" and he would quote the fable of the agreement between the wolves and the lambs.

His courage and tranquillity of mind remained unshaken. He laboured day and night to create an army capable of defending our territory; but the conscription-lists no longer presented disposable men, and the arsenals afforded but meagre resources: all had been exhausted for the campaign of 1812, and the campaign of Saxony. Since then but little had been done. Muskets, for one thing, were totally wanting. For several years past the Emperor had been advised to make use of those which had been given to the national guard. These arms were nearly all that the arsenals contained; but they were in such bad condition, that it was necessary to get them repaired. This situation was cruel. The Emperor had therefore good reason frequently to repeat —"But why was I not told of all this?—Why was the state of the arsenals kept from me?"

The deficiencies in the supply of houses of every description was extreme: for this branch of the service was not less exhausted than the others. It was hoped that money would overcome the difficulty. The Emperor possessed a considerable treasure, the fruit of his economy. He transferred thirty millions to the public treasury; but this resource was far from being sufficient to meet the exigencies. The credit of the government was shaken; and without money it was impossible to rely with certainty on any thing. Under these circumstances, it was resolved to have recourse to the sale of the communel estates. This resource would have been sufficient; but although the measure was carried into effect, by the regular administrative authority, it nevertheless formed one of the grounds of complaint, of which the Legislative Body availed itself, in order to deprive the government of the last support it possessed.

The Legislative Body had been for a long time at Paris; but the session was not opened. How great a responsibility rests on those persons who dissuaded the Emperor from this act, in order to serve their petty private interests! Already were the mischievous and designing occupied with machinations. They tampered with the deputies, who were discontented, in consequence of the inactivity in which they were kept, and particularly on account of the state of affairs which they exaggerated, because it was not brought under their view. They soon began to make all sorts of reflections, and this amongst others, that if the constitution had been stronger, and the resources, both of population and finance, had been not so entirely placed at the disposal of the government, such misfortunes would not, and could not, have happened. Private resentments mixed themselves up with these reflections. The Legislative Body contained some old public functionaries, who imagined they had cause to complain of the Emperor, those especially who had obtained neither favour nor distinction. They believed that a favourable moment had arrived for

bringing him to a strict account. They gave the rein to their passions, instead of occupying themselves with the danger which menaced the state. They had all flattered the Emperor's government during his prosperity; they had lavished praises on all the acts of his administration, when all they had to do was to give their assent; they made him a thousand protestations of fidelity and attachment when he was the master of the world; and in the only conjuncture probably in which he could have had need of their assistance, to extricate the state from a danger which could not fail to involve themselves in destruction, they proved untractable, and selected that moment for regulating the limits of a power, which could not be too absolute for the circumstances of the moment, and the bounds of which they would themselves have readily extended, at a period when it might really have been abused.

This conduct of the Legislative Body completed our misfortune; and a day will arrive when time, which analyses and displays every thing in a proper light, will invest history with the power of reproaching those bad citizens, who prostituted the authority which the confidence of their fellow-countrymen had bestowed on them, and betrayed their country to satisfy private passions.

The months of November and December of this year were fruitful in events. The first that occurred, was the capitulation of the corps which was in Dresden when the battle of Leipsic was fought. This corps obtained the privilege of marching out with the honours of war, and returning into France with arms and baggage; but after some days' march it was disarmed in violation of the stipulations of the convention.

Shortly after, the insurrection of Holland took place. The Emperor had been obliged to draught troops from that country, to incorporate them with an army-corps which he was forming in Belgium. The country being left without any other defence than the garrisons of the Helder and Gorcum, a Russian corps advanced from the banks of the

Ems to those of the Wall; passed the latter river, and presented to the numerous body of the discontented in Holland a rallying point, of which advantage was readily taken. The insurrection burst forth at Amsterdam and Rotterdam almost at the same time. It may be said to have occasioned no effusion of blood. The French authorities, and especially the persons employed in collecting the revenue, against whom the hatred was most decided, fled.

The cry of "*Orange boven*" was every where heard, and the old colours of the Stadtholder were hoisted. Never before did any country return under the dominion of its old chiefs with so little effort. The Russian corps which protected this movement of the people, advanced to the frontier on the side of Gorcum. The Prince of Orange arrived from England almost immediately, and every thing was then finished in Holland; that is to say, we were completely expelled from that country. If General Davout's corps which was in Hamburgh had received orders to quit the banks of the Elbe when the army retired on the Rhine, and had proceeded into Holland, most certainly the insurrection would not have broken out, and the war might perhaps have terminated differently.

The Emperor's situation was dreadful; and yet this was only the prelude to the misfortunes which were about to overwhelm him.

Since the return of the King of Naples to his dominions, he had assembled his army, and had entered into communication with English agents. As he was too weak to make his independence be respected, and as his co-operation would totally change the situation of the Austrians in Italy, it was very evident that the first condition which would be imposed upon him, as necessary to obtain the good graces of the allies, would be to abandon the Emperor, and next to turn his arms against him. This he did, as will be presently seen.

The Emperor, who well knew the inconstant character of

that prince, foresaw the conduct he would adopt. The Austrians had reinforced their army in Italy. It was now so superior to the force we had there, that the struggle could no longer be doubtful. It penetrated, in the first instance, into Illyria; of which it may be recollected that M. Fouché had been appointed governor during the armistice of Neumark.

On the approach of the Austrians an insurrection broke out, and M. Fouché was obliged to withdraw. The Emperor commissioned him to proceed to Naples to advise the King, whose position had become delicate; but instead of devoting his attention to the interests of France, M. Fouché was entirely occupied with his own. He negotiated, and availed himself of the opportunity to obtain payment of some claims he had on the duchy of Otranto. If he himself may be believed, he acted still more improperly; since he has boasted of having fixed the irresolution of Murat, and decided him in favour of the coalition.

If, instead of employing the ascendancy which he had over that prince to conquer the remaining shame which still withheld him from this course, he had induced him to march against his enemies and ours, who knows the turn which affairs might have taken? Who knows whether the allies would have dared to pass the Rhine? Besides, had this determination made no change in the concatenation of events, they would at least both have done what it was their duty to do, Murat especially: for that prince was of the number of those whose position so distinctly chalked out their line of conduct, that any departure from it, any equivocal attitude, was a base treason.

A throne cannot be kept after the loss of honour; for there is no rest on a dishonoured throne.

CHAPTER XXI.

My observations to the Emperor—They appear to make some impression—M. Talleyrand on the point of returning to the ministry—Conditions required by the Emperor—Talleyrand's suggestion, that Wellington might aspire to the crown of England, and that his pretensions should be supported—The Emperor's reply—Change of ministry—The Duke of Vicenza appointed minister for foreign affairs.

I PERCEIVED the danger on all sides so pressing, and at the same time so few efforts made to overcome it, that I determined to speak on the subject to the Emperor.

He himself furnished me with an opportunity after a levy at St. Cloud. He asked my opinion on the state of affairs. I answered that they could not be worse; and what was more, that the intentions of the allies were evident, that they could not be misunderstood, and that they had resolved upon his ruin.—"You believe so?" said he earnestly.—"I know it, Sire. Your Majesty is necessary to the repose of Europe; but the passions do not look to the future. Whatever gives them present gratification is good; provided they are satisfied, it matters little what happens after. Assuredly Austria ought not to take part in these plots; but Metternich knows on what conditions he has bargained with England, and he also knows that you cannot remain ignorant of the compact. It is, therefore, his own throne that he is defending, and for his own power that he is struggling. He will carry every thing to extremities if your Majesty do not hasten to prevent him." The Emperor listened as if he expected that I should state some remedy. I added—"There is but one, Sire. There is an assemblage of diplomatists with their conventional arguments and traditional forms. We must employ one of their own sort against them."—"M. de Talleyrand?"—"Yes, Sire.

Then you will have the same logic, the same morals, the same religion; you cannot do better."—"But the Duke de Bassano?"—"The Duke de Bassano is entirely devoted to you; but he belongs to another school." Here the Emperor interrupted me, and proceeded to eulogise the good qualities of the duke.—"I know," said I, "all that your Majesty has done me the honour to tell me; and it is because I do know it that I advise the choice that I have suggested." He now understood me clearly, and ordered me to go immediately to Paris, and bring M. de Talleyrand to him. I got into my carriage, and drove off to execute the commission with which I was charged; but apparently what I said to the Emperor had made a considerable impression on his mind: for while I was with the Prince of Benevento, a page arrived bringing him an invitation to St. Cloud.

I was persuaded that M. de Talleyrand was about to become minister; but on my return to St. Cloud in the evening, I learned from the Emperor himself the turn which the affair had taken. He had approved very much of all that M. de Talleyrand suggested; and after a long conversation, proposed to him to take the direction of our foreign affairs, on condition, however, that he should resign his office of vice-grand-elector. M. de Talleyrand was willing to accept of the ministry of foreign affairs; but would not agree to the required resignation. He observed, that to diminish his consideration, on giving him a place to which he was recalled at a moment when it was more difficult than ever to discharge its duties, was to deprive him of a means of usefulness. He therefore hesitated, and the Emperor came to no conclusion.

The conversation, however, continued. M. de Talleyrand, who knew the object which had been aimed at by all the preceding coalitions, was not deceived respecting the views of the present. He related to me that he said to the Emperor—"Here is your work destroyed. Your allies, by successively abandoning you, have left you no other alternative but that of

treating without loss of time; treating at their expense, and at all hazards. A bad peace cannot be so fatal to us as the continuance of a war which must be unsuccessful. Time and means to recall fortune to your side are wanting, and your enemies will not allow you a moment to breathe.

"There are, however, among them different interests, which we should endeavour to bring in conflict. Private ambitions present means, of which we might avail ourselves to prepare a diversion."

The Emperor asked him to explain himself, and M. de Talleyrand continued—"There is in England a family which has acquired a distinction favourable to the encouragement of every kind of ambition. It is natural to suppose that it possesses ambition, or at least, that by showing a disposition to second its ambition, we may excite in it the desire of elevation; and also, that there are in England a sufficient number of adventurous men to run the chances of its fortune. At all events, such a proposition could do us no harm. On the contrary, if it were listened to, it might bring about changes which would soon place us in a state in which we would have little to repair. Another consideration is, that your allies having failed you, you can now do nothing solid except with new men connected from the beginning with the conservation of your system."

The Emperor listened to M. de Talleyrand, but desired him to speak out more plainly, remarking, that he was always the same, and that there was no knowing what he would be at. Thus pressed, Talleyrand mentioned the Wellesley family, and said, "Look at Wellington, who may be supposed to have something in view. If he submit to live on his reputation, he will soon be forgotten.—He has several examples before his eyes; and a talent such as his will not be stopped, so long as there is something to be desired."

The Emperor did not adopt these suggestions. He observed, that before helping the ambition of others, it was fit

that he should be in a condition to make himself respected in his government; and added, that at the present moment he could give his attention to nothing else. M. de Talleyrand, however, told me that the Emperor appeared much impressed with what he had stated. He indeed expected that the Emperor would have again spoken to him on the subject.

M. de Talleyrand has been blamed for not making, on such an occasion, the sacrifice required of him. His having made conditions when the exertion of his talents was so much wanted, has been much condemned. It is always easy to blame; but in this case the blame was not merited. M. de Talleyrand knew his situation. He suspected that the same enmity which had long pursued him would soon procure his removal. In that case, if also no longer vice-grand-elector, he would have been reduced to a very destitute situation; for he had suffered greatly by a bankruptcy which took place in the preceding year.

He very reasonably observed, that when the Emperor applied to him, if he meant to have no reserve, he ought not to have withheld any proof of his confidence. He expected that whatever might give him security would be granted him.

On the contrary, as he had not that security, it became his duty to take care of himself, and to avoid being reduced to a very disagreeable situation. He therefore did not choose to divest himself of a rank which was his safeguard, and the project of placing him in the foreign department went no farther. The appointment was given to the Duke of Vicenza, to whom an influence in the court of Russia was then attributed.

The Emperor also removed the Duke of Massa (M. Regnier) from the ministry of justice, and the Count de Cessac from the ministry of war.

He was not dissatisfied with either, but M. Regnier was aged; he had lately experienced an attack of apoplexy, and was menaced with a second. The Emperor feared that it

might occur while he was absent. He therefore made him president of the Legislative Body; and chose for his successor in the ministry Count Molé, who was then inspector-general of bridges and causeways.

The Emperor had a great partiality for M. Molé. He had for a long time wished to place him in a situation in which he would have more frequent intercourse with him; and although M. Molé had no intimate acquaintance with the laws, he placed him at the head of the magistracy, because there are places which seem to be made for names, as there are names which are made for places. This was the case with M. Molé. His appointment was the subject of much observation; for there were many candidates for the place; but when the days of misfortune arrived, M. Molé justified the opinion the Emperor had formed of him.

The Emperor had no complaint to make against M. de Cessac; but as the Duke of Bassano resumed the office of secretary of state, it was necessary to provide for Count Daru, who was therefore appointed to the war-department. M. Daru had been all his life employed in the military administration, and was therefore particularly well calculated for this office. He had followed the armies, and was perfectly well acquainted with their mechanism. He was besides much younger than M. de Cessac, to whom the Emperor gave the retiring rank and pension of a minister of state.

These three changes were made on the same day, at the end of November. They did not long sustain the hopes of the public; but the appointment of the Duke of Vicenza gave particular satisfaction, as he was considered the advocate of peace. He immediately opened, as I have already stated, a correspondence with M. de Metternich. He gave to the bases transmitted by M. de Saint-Aignan an adhesion as complete as that minister had desired; but while the reply was expected, time passed away, and the prospect of the future became every day more adverse.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Emperor does not despair—He carries on his preparations with activity—Detraction—Flattery—The Emperor determines to negotiate with Valencey—Intrigues at that place—Ferdinand's sudden passion for riding on horseback—Plan adopted for subduing it.

THE Emperor, who had not been deceived respecting the views of the allies, employed in the preparation of means of defence the time which was spent by those about him merely in expressing their hopes of a happy change. He was unremitting in his exertions to assemble an army, equip it, and put it in a condition to take the field. He garrisoned the fortresses of the old frontier, which had not been thought of since 1795; but his orders and his provident measures served only to show the paucity of his resources.

All that formidable line of fortresses which like a girdle encircled France, was nearly disarmed. The artillery with which they were once supplied had been transported to the fortresses of the new frontier, and conveyed from place to place as far as the mouth of the Elbe and the Vistula. Incredible efforts were made to supply places which were absolutely destitute, and to remove all that could be collected to the points most exposed to danger. The government evinced extraordinary activity, which was, generally speaking, seconded as far as possible by the population. But public zeal was damped when the picture of our dangers arose before us. A demand was raised for arms from one extremity of France to the other; and instead of this demand being answered by a supply, the few muskets which the national guard yet retained were taken to form a magazine for the supply of the army.

The want of draught horses for the artillery was another

circumstance which occasioned great embarrassment. Recourse was had to all sorts of unpleasant means of accelerating supplies, which could not be made speedily enough, and conformably with the forms prescribed in the regulations. Complaints were heard on all sides, and the resistance of inert force was every where opposed to the government.

The Emperor clearly saw what was approaching. I firmly believe, that in those trying moments he formed a just estimate of the men who six months previously had told him in full council, "that they would consider him dishonoured if he ceded a single village which had been united to the empire by a senatus-consultum." He also knew how to appreciate those who wished to deceive him respecting the real state of affairs. Yet these men very well knew the situation of France, and if, instead of obeying the dictates of silly pride or interested zeal, they had given utterance to the complaints which resounded in their ears, how many misfortunes might have been spared!

But the exclusive favour of the Emperor was the sole object of their ambition. They were mortified if they saw him speak twice to any man who was accounted superior in talent to themselves. They immediately took measures to get rid of such men, and they never rested till they accomplished their purpose. The result of this fatal system was soon obvious. Truth gave place to flattery; zeal and enthusiasm fled; and the empire fell. Our misfortunes were not the work of those who had originally caused them, but the result of an obstinacy which those very individuals were unable to subdue. They shield themselves under the pretext of having exerted a degree of firmness and opposition foreign to their natures. But in vain: their names are inseparably connected with public calamities; and our posterity will see whose hands wrought the destruction of that edifice of glory which we proudly hoped to transmit to them unimpaired.

Those men who are destined never to show themselves on

the field of battle are always most eager for war. They seek to appropriate to themselves the honour and respect which are the reward of those who incur danger. They weigh the talents and courage of a general; and if they cannot reduce these qualities below the ordinary level, they describe him as an unprincipled spoliator. How often have I heard such backbiting addressed to the Emperor respecting men whom he was known to esteem; and when the calumny had taken effect, the injured parties were informed by their detractors that reports had reached the ear of the Emperor, who, in consequence, had conceived unfavourable impressions, which their friendly efforts had been unable to erase! I have frequently heard the Emperor impose silence of these slanderers; and I have often observed him reading angrily the reports of general officers who fancied they were giving him proofs of attachment by calumniating their comrades. A great number of these shameful instances of detraction came to my knowledge; and the only reproach that can be fixed upon the Emperor, is that of having been kind even to weakness to men who sought his favour only from base and interested motives. They crouched to him for their own purposes, but they entertained no regard for him, or at least they had none of that enthusiastic devotedness which they unceasingly professed.

I have already observed that the Emperor, on seeing the host of difficulties that surrounded him, did not deceive himself with respect to the results to which his situation might expose him. Of this the following is a proof.

He placed no confidence in the sentiments expressed in the declarations of the allies. He had said long before, "They have appointed my grave as their place of rendezvous, but none of them will venture to come first." He now added, "Their time of rendezvous has arrived. They think the lion dead; and the question is, Who will give the ass's kick. If France abandon me, I can do nothing; but she will soon repent of doing so."

He conceived it to be impossible but that the allies should know with tolerable accuracy the difficulties with which he had to contend; and he was well aware that that circumstance, far from creating any pacific disposition on their part, only inclined them to extend their demands. But this consideration, far from discouraging him, served only as a fresh stimulus to his activity.

His conduct on this trying occasion serves to show what may be effected by genius such as his. We may judge what he would have done had he been supported. Fate seemed to have proportioned the weight of his misfortunes to his power of endurance. Nothing astonished him, or shook his firmness.

The Emperor resolved to bring the affairs of Spain to a close. Had he done so two months earlier, there is no doubt but he would have averted his calamities; for the Spanish army might have been in Burgundy when the allied forces arrived on the frontiers of Switzerland. He mentioned this plan to Cambacérès, by whom it was decidedly approved. The minister for foreign affairs was ordered to direct immediate attention to it. The minister applied to me for a permission to enable M. de la Forest, who belonged to the department of foreign affairs, to visit Valencey, and remain there whenever he thought fit. He also applied for a passport for the Duke de San Carlos, who had been separated from the Prince of the Asturias while M. Fouché was in office, and who resided at Lons-le-Saulnier, in Franche-Comté.

The Spanish princes lived in perfect retirement at Valencey. However, all their movements were well known; and those who know any thing of Spanish manners, will readily believe that it was unnecessary to resort to any disagreeable measures for the purpose of observing them. There was as much intrigue at the little court of Valencey as ever there was at Madrid. The confidence of the Prince

was as great a subject of competition as the vice-royalty of Mexico. The most ambitious courtier was always ready to sacrifice his rival; and that rival would readily have had recourse to any means of getting rid of the person he feared.

The Spanish princes were therefore never watched by me, except through those competitions. It was only necessary to make use of one's eyes and ears; and I therefore recommended that they should be allowed full freedom. I was very glad to be thus exempt from the necessity of adopting those coercive measures, which the general state of affairs would perhaps have authorised.

On one occasion only I experienced a little difficulty. The Prince of the Asturias suddenly conceived a violent passion for riding on horseback, though previously he had shown but little inclination to go out; and when he did, went always in a carriage. I felt a little embarrassed: for though I was not to be made his dupe, yet I was unwilling to deprive him of the amusement which he seemed anxious to enjoy. I took my measures accordingly. His saddle-horses all at once fell into a most wretched condition; so that whenever he wanted to ride, one was lame, another had a nail in his foot, &c. As he was not much of a horseman, many of these little accidents were attributed to himself, though they were the work of a man who was employed to keep the stud in this continual state of inefficiency. The trick succeeded, and at length his Highness's riding-fit left him, which I was very glad of.

I neglected no opportunity of communicating to the Prince of the Asturias any intelligence which was calculated to interest him: and I endeavoured to banish that spirit of intrigue which so often connects itself with misfortune, and which I thought was likely to lead him into difficulties. The Emperor particularly recommended me to treat the Prince with all the respect that was consistent with my duty.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Conventions of Valancey—They are not carried into execution—Determination which ought to have been adopted on the subject of the bridge of Bâle—The author proposes that the public functionaries should remain at their posts—His motives—Mission of extraordinary commissioners—State of public opinion—Stratagems of the allies—Opening of the Legislative Body.

TRIFLES were now contended for at Valancey, notwithstanding that all parties were agreed upon the principal point. The idea had certainly occurred of demanding from the Prince of Asturias the cession of Catalonia; but it was wisely considered that any advantage that might be taken of his situation, to require sacrifices opposed to his dignity, and indicative of restraint on his part, would be affording him, on his reaching Spain, a pretext for breaking all his engagements. It was consequently determined, that the princes of the Spanish house of Bourbon should return to Spain; and that King Joseph, the Emperor's brother, should resign all the pretensions he might have to the throne of that kingdom, in virtue of anterior acts acknowledged by all the powers of Europe, with the exception of England. The Prince of Asturias engaged, on his part, to maintain peace between the Spanish and the French nations; and in furtherance of this object, to withdraw all the Spanish troops which were serving with the English army; and, in short, not to allow a passage through his dominions to any foreign troops attempting to invade the French frontiers.

This arrangement was signed by both parties; and no attention seems to have been paid to the good faith displayed by the Emperor in concluding it. No doubt would be entertained on this point, if a correct appreciation could be formed of the difficulties he met with from his brother, and the

pressing entreaties he had to urge, before he could prevail upon him, simply and unreservedly to renounce his pretensions to that crown. The Emperor, who did me the honour to mention the subject to me, said, that in a discussion with his brother, who obstinately resisted his wishes, he had addressed these words to him—"One would really suppose that I am robbing you of your portion of the inheritance of the late king, our father." Marshal Berthier was alone acquainted with all these details, having been commissioned by the Emperor to follow up the negotiations with King Joseph. The most unaccountable circumstance is that when every thing had been agreed upon, and when such earnest endeavours had been made to bring about an arrangement, which allowed of the disposal of forces nearly double the amount of what the Emperor had at command, so much tardiness was suddenly displayed in carrying it into effect, that it proved of no advantage to us in the crisis of our affairs.

M. de San-Carlos had brought back the treaty from Valancey, and yet no progress had been made, since the opening of the negotiations, in preparing to take advantage of the clauses which were to be adopted.

Never was any time of more value to us than the present moment; never was the danger so pressing. We had felt no apprehension at the loss of the confederation of the Rhine, some months before, in consequence of the withdrawing of Marshal Augereau's corps from the frontier of Bavaria, for the purpose of uniting it to the main army; and on this occasion, when the very existence of France was in danger, the necessity was overlooked of ordering the army in Spain to adopt a similar movement, when it was yet in time to reach the theatre of events, where its presence would have altered the aspect of affairs.

It cannot be sufficiently regretted that the Emperor's orders should have been ill executed, and even eluded, for self-interested purposes. I will state what I have ascertained

on the subject through the channels of information at my command, in order to clear up this enigma, or at least to unravel much of the obscurity in which it is involved. It will be seen that the spirit of intrigue had not slumbered, and that the safety of the state was not considered an object of paramount importance.

The Emperor had desired me not to neglect any means calculated to procure him positive intelligence of the plans of the allied armies. I happened to have the facility at my command of bringing about an intercourse between a person attached to my service and one of his friends, who followed the head-quarters of the coalition, and had free access to the chancery department of Prince Schwartzenberg. I accordingly dispatched him through Switzerland to the hostile army; the formation of which in the Brisgaw afforded a sufficient indication of its views.

This person wrote from Bâle to advise that I should exert all my influence to procure the immediate destruction of the bridge over the Rhine at that town, either by purchasing it of the Swiss, or in any other manner. We had no time to make this suggestion the subject of a regular negotiation, which would necessarily have been acted upon by the influence of the enemies, who could not have looked at it with indifference. The proper time for purchasing the bridge was after the defection of Bavaria, when it should have been immediately destroyed.

The person I have alluded to returned in all haste to Paris, and informed me of all he had ascertained in the camp of the enemy, who was preparing his offensive movement towards the frontier.

I then thought it my duty to become importunate until the Emperor should have taken measures and issued instructions respecting the conduct to be pursued by the local authorities in case of an invasion, which I considered as being about to take place. I urged this point with so much perseverance,

that I was at last attended to; and a council was expressly held to discuss it. Independently of the ministers at the heads of departments who were present at this council, the Emperor summoned to it the ministers of state and the high dignitaries of the empire.

I urged the dangers to which the territory had been exposed at the early period of the revolution, and that to the energetic measures of the then existing government was owing the gigantic display of forces which had preserved the state from ruin.

I laid great stress on the magnitude of the danger, which was as urgent as the time for averting it was short; and I warmly urged the necessity for the immediate exertion of every means calculated to excite a national movement, without which we must expect the most serious misfortunes.

I represented the conduct of the Austrians, when we had occupied their provinces. They had exhibited the sound policy of issuing instructions to all persons in civil employments, and of making them remain at their posts. The latter established regularity in every transaction. It must be admitted that they were thus made available to our own purposes; but they preserved the country from greater evils; and, above all, they watched over the persons they were appointed to superintend, and by their presence and authority kept them within the bounds of duty.

I was here interrupted by a member of the council, who observed to me, that the Austrians had never afforded us so much facility to take possession of their country, as by leaving each public servant at his post; that we ought to be on our guard against imitating their example; that when they found the local administrations had fled, they would be compelled to disorganise every thing, and would thus be obstructed at every step of their progress.

Notwithstanding this observation, I still insisted upon the necessity for the persons in civil employments being allowed

to remain at their posts; and being provided with instructions to perform with a good grace what they would be unable to refuse if coercive measures were resorted to, I added, that this system would be beneficial to the country, and would save it from plunder; and that, on the other hand, should fortune present a favourable opportunity for a general rise, it might the more easily be resorted to, and there would be no difficulty in fixing upon those who were to promote it. No public functionary would then venture to disown the authority that would address him, of whatever nature might be the orders transmitted for his guidance.

I remarked that we were now in a very different position from what Austria had been placed in. It was, no doubt, true, that if the government of that country had withdrawn its civil servants on our approach, we should have been greatly embarrassed to find substitutes for them, because her population did not present so many well-informed men as were to be found amongst the French people; but this was the very reason for avoiding to imitate her conduct. By removing the public authorities, we should deprive ourselves of many means of information, and of many levers for setting the people in motion, if an opportunity offered, without at all succeeding in arresting the progress of the enemy; because any counsellor of a prefecture, or any person in a civil employment on the spot, would be sufficient to carry on the machinery of the service to as great an extent as would answer the enemy's purpose. I added, that those provisional functionaries would not endanger their lives in our service, the less so as they would always have a ready excuse to refuse complying with what might be required of them, even supposing that there were any means of finding them out. The conclusion, in short, which I drew from all these observations was, that there would be much less disadvantage in leaving the local administrations in the exercise of their respective duties. This particular view which I took of the subject was not concurred

in by the council. It was still believed that their removal at the moment of the enemy's approach would impede their progress. They were instructed to quit their respective residences according as the enemy should approach. I was greatly disappointed at this determination, being fully aware of the intentions of the allied sovereigns, and clearly foreseeing that this measure would be rather beneficial to them than otherwise.

The council also came to the resolution of sending a commissioner of government to each military division, in order to excite a spirit of emulation, and endeavour to rekindle that national energy which had formerly produced such wonderful effects. These commissioners were received with every manifestation of good-will; but hope was banished from every mind, without which enthusiasm is of no avail. The springs of public energy were worn out; the general feeling was one of perfect resignation to whatever fate might determine. In some parts of France, no doubt, there was seen an occasional spark of the sacred fire: nevertheless, the call for arms was to be heard from one extremity of the country to the other; the cry of treason met the ear in all quarters; the minister of war was accused; and it cost me some pains to do away with the unfavourable impression he had made upon many. It is very true that the manufactories of arms were at a stand. Every one asked how it happened that, in such a pressing emergency, the idea had never occurred of establishing a manufactory of arms in Paris, as it had been done during the revolution: how those of Liege, Charleville, Maubeuge, and Alsace, had not been sent to Paris, in order to establish the general depôt in the capital. Had this measure been resorted to immediately after the battle of Leipsic, the manufactory at Paris, with the assistance of the multitude of workmen who abound in it, might have supplied two or three thousand muskets a day. This would have been sufficient to save France; and as the minister of war had voted for the continuation of hostilities,

it behoved him at least to consider of the means best calculated for vigorously prosecuting it. It must, however, be admitted, that he had more work on his hands than he could find time to attend to; and it was difficult to foresee the rapid march of events. I have often heard him say that he thought it a great act of folly not to make peace. He then repented of the advice he had given on the return from the campaign in Russia.

The commissioners deputed by government were not all able to reach their respective destinations, some of them having met the enemy on their way.

Our preparations, however weak, had nevertheless created a due impression upon the allies. They trembled lest the nation should take part in the contest carrying on, and they neglected no means of spreading false reports in every direction. The defensive measures resorted to were stigmatised as projects of conquest. They affected a language of moderation, whilst they had an army six times as numerous as that which the Emperor could bring against them. They were in the very heart of France, and yet presumed to charge him with ambition, and to arraign him for having called upon the French to come forward in defence of their homes and families.

Every one had taken leave of his senses. The artful language of the enemy was mistaken for truth, and the Emperor's warnings were rejected.

The opening of the Legislative Body, which had been adjourned from day to day, was at last fixed for the 20th of December. The Emperor felt desirous of making to that assembly a communication of the reply he had received from the allies: this was one of the motives which had so long delayed the opening of the session. That ceremony took place in the forms used on preceding occasions; and the Emperor pronounced the customary speech. It appeared to me defective so far, as it did not dwell sufficiently on the events

which had brought about the existing crisis of affairs. The public mind in France was too much engaged in the consideration of past and present occurrences to be satisfied with the simple statement made to the Legislative Body; and I have always been of opinion, that it would have been far better not to present any, than to conceal a single circumstance, or to speak more correctly, than to abstain from showing it the most unbounded confidence: since the least inconvenience that could result from such a reserve would be to excite the hostility of that body, which would seize the first opportunity of curtailing a power which alarmed it, and force it to yield to the ascendancy of public opinion.

The members of the Legislative Body had been a full month in Paris, where they had been overwhelmed with the various false reports scattered over that city. They expected to receive a communication which would remove the impressions they had imbibed from every thing that had reached their ears; in the absence of such communication, their prejudices remained unchanged. They were, nevertheless, flattered at being made acquainted with the state of the negotiation, though they discovered that some documents had been concealed from their knowledge. This circumstance was of itself quite unimportant, but was taken advantage of by the members as a pretence for continuing to mistrust the government. It is fair to own, that nothing was easier than to influence the assembly; because it was not yet personally indisposed against the Emperor, and still less unwilling to refuse concurring by every means in its power to extricate the nation from the crisis in which it was involved. I repeat it, the Legislative Body was not influenced by any unfriendly spirit: there were some discontented individuals among its members; but the majority were flattered at being called upon to attend a sitting which promised opportunities to some of ingratiating themselves into favour, and to others of displaying their patriotism and talents. The slightest exertion of skill was suffi-

cient to discover the bias of their sentiments. This requires to be explained more in detail.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Intrigues set on foot in order to interpose between the government and the Legislative Body—Prejudices instilled into the Emperor's mind—Diplomatic communications—The assembly displays a spirit of independence in the choice of the commission—Unbecoming language of the report—M. Lainé—Privy-council to consider of the means to be resorted to in the existing crisis—Contradictory opinions—The sitting of the Legislative Body is adjourned—How easy it would have been to turn that assembly to a good account.

I HAVE already mentioned that the Emperor had appointed to the presidency of the Legislative Body the Duke of Massa, whom he had lately removed from the ministry of justice.

The sessions of the Legislative Body were always circumstances laid hold of by intriguers as favourable to their views: they took care beforehand to spread uneasiness amongst its members; and after having gathered a harvest from the seeds which they had sown, they hastened to sound the alarm in the ears of those who came in contact with government. The latter, who were directly interested in the successful issue of affairs, never failed to make a confidential report on the subject, in which they quoted their authorities.

This was one of the ways resorted to for making an exhibition of zeal for the Emperor's service, and for obtaining to be placed on the favoured list.

The stay which the members of the Legislative Body had made in Paris, had afforded a wide field for the schemes of intriguers; and as the generality of such characters are jealous of every one, they took care on this occasion to ascribe to the influence of those individuals whom they dreaded, or were

desirous of injuring, all the sinister intentions which they fancied they had discovered amongst a few members of the Legislative Body.

I narrowly watched the progress of events without endeavouring to bias the actions of any one, as it is necessary to be thoroughly convinced that others are in error before we can attempt to set them right. It often happens that when we desire to lead a person in any particular way, we often engender mistrust: another direction will then be followed through a spirit of opposition: this is what actually came to pass in the circumstance now alluded to. The Duke of Massa had been represented to the Emperor as incapable of directing the measures of the assembly in times of so much difficulty. It was alleged that his mental faculties had been impaired by the two apoplectic fits with which he had been attacked. Had this been the case, the remark ought at least to have been made previously to his appointment to the presidency. But in all probability matters were not as yet ripe for acquiring the influence aimed at; or else it was apprehended that another president would be less tractable.

They succeeded, by means of certain reports, in obtaining the Emperor's authority for joining in the agitation which they told him was to be found in the Legislative Body.

These gentlemen had taken the business so much at heart, that they were even in dread of shadows. They caused a positive order to be sent to me, in very abrupt language, which directed my abstaining from taking any measures with respect to the Legislative Body, with whom I never was in the habit of interfering, except in the exercise of that customary superintendence which it was my duty not to relax in; and I must say it to the praise of that assembly, I had never witnessed the expression of any sentiments, but such as might easily be turned to the advantage of the national welfare.

The first measures of those who thus presumed to direct the conduct of the Legislative Body, were perceived in the for-

mation of the committee, in the appointments to the offices of questors, and to other places the nomination to which is always the result of an election. The assembly directly perceived that it was intended to lead it; and they discovered, from the movements of certain individuals, whose sentiments were no secret, the nature of the influence which it was attempted to place as a controul over them.

There is in man a natural disposition to repel every thing derogatory to his dignity; and a public body particularly is apt to recoil at the idea of being led in a direction which it can find out without the aid of a mentor. Those, however, who are accustomed to a life of agitation, must ever be like the fly in the fable, otherwise they would possess no merit; and all unsuccessful efforts on their part would go for nothing, notwithstanding that they had calculated upon being rewarded for them. They ought at least to have taken the precaution of remaining in the back ground, and availing themselves of the services of orators known to be devoted to their interests. Their unskilful management prevented all the good that might have been obtained from an assembly, the dissolution of which fully answered the purpose of the allies, who were desirous of tearing asunder the ties which united the Emperor to the nation.

The assembly yielded to the predominating influence, and named as its questors the individuals pointed out to its choice; but it again resumed its character, unceremoniously rejected every suggestion bearing an official character, and named M. Lainé for its vice-president.* From that moment intriguers were at their last gasp. In consequence of the communications which the Emperor ordered to be made to the Legislative Body respecting the state of affairs, the latter appointed a commissioner to examine the documents connected with the department of foreign affairs, which were

* M. Lainé, at that time a lawyer of Bordeaux, was considered as a confirmed republican. This impression determined the choice which was made of him.

submitted for its information ; and proved by the persons which it fixed upon to compose it, that it had the will to assert its independence. This could not be imputed to it as a fault: it ought not to have been applied to, or else our position should have been laid open to its view with the utmost candour; first, because this was an indispensable duty ; and secondly, because it was personally interested in extricating us from our difficulties. Had it even asked for any unjust concessions, they ought to have been granted to it. There could be no dishonour in yielding to the national wish. That assembly, besides, did not call for any thing unreasonable. There was not much difference between what it claimed, and what the Emperor always intended to accede to. It was not difficult, therefore, to establish a mutual good understanding. Nothing more was required than that the harsh language used should be softened down into a milder tone, an object so easily attained by a mere turn of phrase; and all difficulties would have been thenceforward removed. The contrary course was adopted. The report of the commission of the Legislative Body was represented to the Emperor as a personal attack against him, and also as the tocsin which was calling out popular assemblies in all directions. He was told that his power would thus be insensibly undermined ; that not a moment was to be lost in guarding against the consequences of such hostile intentions. I must acknowledge there was some truth in this opinion; but we could no longer weigh matters with too great a nicety.

The Emperor wrote to me to desire I would procure the report of the commission of the Legislative Body which was printed, and intended for distribution at the sitting of the following day.

He had strictly enjoined me not to interfere in any thing that related to that assembly. This was a word to the wise. I cautiously avoided incurring his displeasure, or marring what he intended to do by other means. Those advisers of

the Emperor who were so warm in their zeal, might have procured the report before they allowed matters to go so far. This was, however, on a par with their conduct on every other occasion.

I had very fortunately the report by me, and immediately sent it to the Tuileries. As it was to make its appearance the next morning, an extraordinary privy-council was convened at night, and was attended by King Joseph, the high dignitaries, the ministers, and the secretaries of state. The president of the Legislative Body also attended in the latter capacity.

The composition of this council combined every thing that could be desired, whether in point of talents, or of devotedness to the Emperor's service.

M. de Bassano, in his character of secretary of state, read the report of the commission of the Legislative Body. It is proper to observe that every means had been resorted to some days before, for the purpose of letting the commission know what language was expected from it, whether in the statement or in its conclusions. The attempt had failed of success, and the report was now under deliberation at the privy-council. It must be acknowledged that this document held a language which was revolting to the government; and yet it was a first attack.

The Emperor allowed every one to state his opinion. Strong reasons were urged, especially by the arch-chancellor, in favour of the Legislative Body; but no one would undertake to pledge himself that there did not exist some after-thought of reviving principles the profession of which had been productive of such deep calamities.* On coming to this part of the discussion, every one recoiled with a feeling of uneasiness, saying that he would not answer for the possible consequences of such or such an event, &c.

* It was greatly feared that M. Lainé, the vice-president, had a revolutionary object in view.

The Emperor had often complained, that in every council which he assembled, the discussions always took the same turn. It seemed as if a catastrophe was foreseen; and that each one felt as much anxiety not to connect his name with it, as to guard against its consequences.

The Emperor returned to the question, and asked if, in the existing state of things, the view taken by the Legislative Body would not be productive of more harm than good. He even asked if there might not be ground for apprehending that in case of a military reverse, or of the enemy's approaching the capital, the assembly would declare itself permanent, and seize upon the government. He wished to know if it was considered proof against any hostile influence, whether internal or otherwise; and concluded with these words—"Speak out your sentiments, gentlemen; you have the experience of the revolution: you have seen what have been the consequences to us of the good intentions of the constituent assembly; does the present one afford any better guarantee against its falling into similar errors?"

No one dared to affirm it; but all were unanimous in defending the assembly from the mere suspicion of yielding to any foreign influence: as to an internal one, it must always exist; events alone would determine the direction it would assume.

"In that case," replied the Emperor, "I have nothing to hope from it; since it will never come to any decision until fortune shall have already decided. What need have I of that assembly, if, instead of giving me the support of its strength, it only throws difficulties in my way? Is this the proper moment, when the national existence is threatened, to speak to me of constitutions and of the rights of the people? In a case analogous to the present state of France, the ancients extended the power of the government instead of restraining it. Here, on the contrary, we are losing our time in trifles, whilst the enemy is at our doors. I was unwilling to trust to my

own opinion on the subject; but as I find that the majority agree with me, my resolution is formed, and I will adjourn an assembly which is so little disposed to second me."

He immediately signed the decree to that effect, and gave me the order to seize every copy of the report of the commission of the Legislative Body.

This measure was adopted on a Friday night, and communicated on the following day to every member of the Legislative Body.

In conformity with the Emperor's orders, I saw the members of the commission. They no doubt felt some uneasiness at calling upon me, as it was probably represented to them that they would become the victims of some acts of violence. I had a very different language to hold to them; and had an opportunity of satisfying myself that, if they had been differently dealt with, not only a heavy misfortune would have been averted, but a mighty impulse have been given to the nation by means of such a lever as the Legislative Body. Several men of talents might also have been discovered amongst its members, who would have been an invaluable acquisition to the public service; because, hitherto, the party who had places at their disposal, exclusively selected for them out of the circle of their private friends. These persons introduced their own acquaintances into other places; and so on, an abuse of which I had long been convinced. I was much pleased with the members of the commission of the Legislative Body: there were no bad intentions amongst them; and it is much to be regretted, that the slight ingredient of skill required to establish a harmony of opinions, which were not widely different, should, nevertheless, have been wanting.

The adjournment of the Legislative Body created as many different impressions as there are circles of society in Paris. Such an event would have created astonishment under ordinary circumstances: it produced a much more powerful sensation in the present crisis. Some hopes had been built

upon the existence of that assembly: they had now vanished: all were deeply mortified at the occurrence. Every endeavour was made to find out what could have given rise to the measure; and as no explanatory details were afforded, imagination wandered in its search after truth, as must always be the case on such an occasion. There must be something, said every one, which we are not aware of. The Emperor must have had a knowledge of some such projects as that of the 23rd of October; otherwise, he would not have relinquished the advantages he might expect to derive from that assembly. This was the prevailing opinion; it contributed to strike terror into the minds of those persons who had still indulged in hopes of better times.

On the following Sunday, the members of the Legislative Body came to take leave of the Emperor, according to the customary forms practised in ordinary cases of closing the sessions.

They were introduced to the Emperor's apartment by the arch-chancellor, just as divine-service had terminated.

The Emperor descended from the platform on which the throne was placed, and coming up to the deputies, he spoke to them without anger, and addressed them in nearly the following words:—

"Gentlemen of the Chamber of Deputies, you are on the point of returning to your respective departments. I discovered with unfeigned regret, that the spirit of agitation which has broken out amongst you was only calculated to aggravate the misfortunes of the state, instead of affording me the means of overcoming them. I had called you together with the most perfect reliance upon you, and depended upon your concurrence in my endeavours to illustrate this period of our history. You might have rendered a signal service by not separating yourselves from me, by giving me all the support I stood in need of, instead of considering by what means you might contend with me for power, or attempting

to confine me within limits, which you would be the first to extend when you had discovered the fatal effects of your internal dissensions. Time will show, whether those who have given you that impulse had their private interest or the general advantage at heart. I have never been deaf to any representation made to me in favour of the national welfare; and if you had any observations to make to me respecting public liberties, this was not the moment for making them a subject of discussion; since the effect would be to paralyse the enthusiasm of the nation which it was so essential to foment.

"By what authority, besides, do you consider yourselves entitled to limit the action of government at such a moment as the present? Have you received from your constituents any right to question the legitimacy of power? Am I indebted to you for the authority which is vested in me? I hold it from God and the people only. Have you forgotten in what manner I ascended the throne you now attack? There existed at that period an assembly like your own. Had I deemed its authority and its choice sufficient for my purpose, do you suppose I wanted the means of obtaining its votes? I have never been of opinion that a sovereign could be elected in that manner. I was desirous, therefore, that the wish so generally expressed for my being invested with the supreme authority, should be submitted to a national vote, taken from every person in the French dominions: by such means only did I accept of a throne. This right is very different from any I could ever hold from you; and under no circumstances can you be allowed to make its authenticity the subject of your deliberations. Your power merges into mine from the moment you attempt to exceed the instructions of your constituents. The rights of the throne are beyond your reach, because the throne is independent of you. Do you imagine that I consider the throne as nothing more than a piece of velvet spread over trestles? This is a mistake: the throne consists in the una-

nimous wishes of the nation in favour of their sovereign. As Emperor, I stand pledged to its integrity. I will preserve it such as it was handed to me; otherwise it would no longer have any attraction, and would be wholly unsuited to me. If this should ever cease to be the case, you may then govern yourselves as you think proper. Judge your own acts, and consider what circumstances you have chosen for throwing embarrassments in my way. Would there not be some reason for supposing that you are in the service of our enemies? Our position is surrounded with difficulties. By adhering to my views, you might have been of the greatest assistance to me. Nevertheless, I trust, with the help of God, and of the army, that I shall extricate myself, if I am not doomed to be betrayed. Should I fall in the contest, you cannot escape self-reproach; and to you alone will necessarily be ascribed the evils that will desolate our common country. You shall see what it costs to rely upon Punic faith. You may then recall the Bourbons: they alone will be fit sovereigns for you. Since you will have renounced your independence, it will not be binding upon them to cause it to be respected."

Some deputies replied to certain passages of the Emperor's speech: he listened attentively to them; but did not admit the validity of their excuses, and persisted in the sentiments he had expressed.

This audience lasted a full quarter of an hour: it was the last that he ever granted to the Legislative Body.

CHAPTER XXV.

Opinion of the arch-chancellor on the dissolution of the Legislative Body—Fouché's sentiments respecting deliberative assemblies—Violation of the Helvetic territory—The allied armies penetrate into France—Geneva—Simultaneous progress of the invasion—The Emperor needed only a delay of two months.

THE Emperor having returned to his apartments, sent for the arch-chancellor, M. de Bassano, and myself. He showed no particular indications of displeasure against the Legislative Body. He complained in general language of the impossibility of constituting an assembly that would candidly follow the impulse given by the government, which it always considered as its enemy; and he observed, that it was also with a manifestation of the best intentions towards Louis XVI. that they had gradually brought him to the scaffold. He said, that the assembly must either have lost their senses, or have been desirous of bringing the enemy to France, when they could act in this manner; that in either case it would have been dangerous to allow of the existence of this state of things behind him, when he was on the point of proceeding to join the army, where he should find quite enough to engage his attention, without having the additional embarrassment of directing the proceedings of such an assembly. Upon asking the arch-chancellor's opinion, the latter replied, that he had long ago expressed his sentiments respecting constituted bodies; and he still thought it would be found very difficult to do without them, though he disapproved of the spirit of opposition displayed by a portion of the Legislative Body; being of opinion, at the same time, that if a different course of proceeding had been adopted, a misunderstanding, which could only be productive of evils, might have been avoided. I had not the advantage of the arch-chancellor's experience,

and the Emperor was quite indifferent to my opinion on this subject: he accordingly did not call for it.

He replied to the arch-chancellor in these words:—"What would you have had me do with an assembly which only waited for a favourable opportunity to excite a disturbance in the state? It afforded me no opportunity for enlightening public opinion, and exhibited no other feeling than that of ill-will towards me."—"I recollect, besides," added the Emperor, "that M. Fouché, who was connected with all these men, entertained the same opinion in respect to them. He often spoke to me of the necessity of suppressing the Legislative Body. He said that its members only came to Paris for the purpose of obtaining certain favours, for which they importuned ministers from morning till night, and complained that their wishes were not immediately attended to. When invited to dinner, they were bursting with envy at beholding the opulence of the houses in which they were admitted; and, after all, they returned to their departments with the conviction that government plundered in every direction to enrich its favourites. Such was their language in private societies, where they were looked upon as oracles on their return from the capital."

The Emperor added, that this opinion of M. Fouché might be relied upon as sincere, since he had always professed republican principles. Nevertheless, the arch-chancellor persisted in his opinion.

The Legislative Body had opened its sitting on the 21st of December, and its adjournment was, I believe, decreed on the 1st of January. During this short interval of time, news had been received of the violation of the neutrality of Switzerland, and of the entrance of the hostile armies into its territory on their way to invade us. The intelligence was conveyed to Paris with great rapidity by means of commercial couriers from Bâle. It is proper I should state in this place that at the time of the accumulation of allied troops

in the Brisgaw, the Swiss Cantons, from which France had demanded an explanation respecting the conduct they intended to pursue in the event of a passage being demanded by the enemy across the Helvetic territory, had given for reply, that they would cause their neutrality to be respected, and had sent a deputation to assure the Emperor of the good faith of Switzerland, and of her determination not to permit any violation of her territory. This deputation was still in Paris when intelligence was brought of the events that had taken place at Bâle.

The allies had in fact given to the Helvetic body the assurance that they would respect their frontiers; but intrigue was at work in that, as it was in every other quarter. It had quietly been spreading its nets, and when every thing was in readiness the explosion took place. Switzerland suddenly learned that it was no longer free; but that the coalition, feeling anxious to restore her former independence, was going to oppress her with a million of soldiers. * The general who

* "The undersigned have received orders from their respective courts to deliver to His Excellency the Landamman of Switzerland the subjoined declaration:—

"Switzerland was for many ages past in the enjoyment of an independence alike beneficial to herself, useful to her neighbours, and necessary to the maintenance of the political balance. The scourge of the French revolution, and the wars which for twenty years have destroyed the happiness of every state in Europe, have been equally unsparing of Switzerland. Shaken in her internal administrations, weakened by unavailing efforts to oppose the destructive effects of the torrent, she was deprived by France, her pretended ally, of the principal bulwarks of her independence. At last the Emperor Napoleon founded upon the ruins of the federative constitution of Helvetia, and under a title never before known, a supreme power, with all its appendages of form and stability, but incompatible with the freedom of the confederacy, with that ancient liberty respected by all the powers of Europe, the first guarantee of the amicable intercourse which Switzerland had kept up until the day of its common oppression with other European powers, and the first condition of an actual neutrality. The principles which animate the coalesced sovereigns in the present war are well known. Every nation which still retains the memory of its independence must acknowledge the justice of those principles. It is the desire of the sovereigns that Switzerland should, in common with all Europe, participate anew in the blessings of this first national

was to cause the territory of the cantons to be respected, found that his efforts would be all in vain. "The high allied powers had declared that the neutrality of Switzerland could not be acknowledged under present circumstances, and that the act of mediation was annulled, with all its consequences. The object therefore for which the federative army had been collected, no longer existed. He disbanded his troops, and ordered them to return to their homes." This act was without a precedent; but the contingent troops were compelled to withdraw, and we were assailed in the most vulnerable part of our frontiers.

Prince Schwartzenberg was commander-in-chief of the allied armies; he had brought with him the greater part of the troops belonging to the princes of the late confederation of the Rhine, in order to render them more available than they had hitherto proved; this numerous army broke up from the plains of Friedling in front of Huningen, and arrived at the

law, and obtain the means of upholding it by recovering her ancient limits. But they cannot admit of a neutrality which, in the existing relations of Switzerland, is nothing more than a nominal one. The armies of the coalesced powers indulge the hope, on entering the Swiss territory, that they will meet with none but friends. Their Majesties bind themselves not to lay down their arms without having secured for Switzerland the restitution of that portion of her territory which France has wrested from her. They will not interfere with her internal constitution, but they will not allow her to remain subject to a foreign influence. They will acknowledge her liberty from the day when she shall be restored to freedom and independence: and they expect from the patriotism of a respectable nation, that, faithful to the principles which, in ages gone by, have laid the foundation of her glory, she will not refuse her accession to the noble and generous undertakings for which the sovereigns and the nations of Europe have agreed to make common cause. The undersigned are directed at the same time to communicate to His Excellency the Landamman the proclamation and order of the day, which is to be published by the commander-in-chief of the grand army of the coalition on its entrance into the Swiss territory. They trust that His Excellency will not fail to discover in that document the sincerity of the sentiments entertained by their Majesties towards the Helvetic confederation.

(Signed) "Lebzeltern, Capo D'Istria.

"20th December, 1813."

entrance of the bridge of Bâle at an early hour on the 20th or 21st of December, at the very moment when the Emperor was repairing to the Legislative Body in the French capital. The Swiss had not destroyed the bridge of Bâle, but merely removed the planks, without throwing any of the beams into the river, so that the bridge could be repaired in the space of two hours, as the event actually proved.

Prince Schwartzenberg presented himself at the entrance of the bridge on the right bank, and demanded a passage across in the name of the allied sovereigns. He summoned the Swiss to repair their bridge under pain of having their town set on fire. His orders were complied with: the planks were replaced, and a free passage allowed; and Bâle beheld, during eight successive days, this countless number of troops penetrating through its territory on their way to spread desolation in France, setting forth at the same time that they were actuated by principles of moderation and humanity.

A portion of the allied army, consisting of Austrians, passed through Switzerland with the intention of debouching by Geneva, and arrived before that town on the very day when the brave general who commanded the garrison had been attacked with an apoplectic fit. It had only fifteen hundred ill-equipped soldiers, mostly veterans, to defend it. The population was numerous, and foremost amongst those who placed confidence in the language of the enemy; so that the garrison was under the necessity of overawing the inhabitants, who were too well inclined to throw open their gates.

The evil-disposed people of Geneva were fully sensible of its weakness. They did not remain inactive, but exerted all their endeavours to persuade the officer who had succeeded his general in the command of the garrison, to accept of a capitulation which would allow him to retire from the town with all the honours of war. The civil authorities had already withdrawn. The officer gave way, and the frontier was thrown back in that direction as far as Fort L'Ecluse.

The Emperor Alexander, on his part, first established his head-quarters at Bâle, and pushed forward a corps into Alsace, composed of the Bavarian troops, who testified their gratitude towards us by re-opening the wounds we had received in defending their independence.

This Bavarian corps was commanded by general Wrede, the Bavarian officer whom the Emperor had marked out amongst others as the object of his special regard. He had presented him with an estate producing an income of thirty thousand livres, which fell to his disposal in consequence of the treaty of peace of 1809, and had the advantage of being situated in that portion of the Austrian territory assigned over to Bavaria on that occasion.

Wrede was one of those men with whose characters the Emperor had been more particularly pleased: he always delighted in the company of that officer, and in being of service to him. The Bavarian corps summoned the town of Huningen, which rejected every proposal. The enemy blockaded it, and pushed forward a reconnoitring party as far as Colmar, whilst their main army was penetrating into France by Altkirch, Béfort, and Vesoul. Béfort had but a weak garrison; to make up for this defect, its population had a very martial character, and it made a brilliant and vigorous defence. The hostile army advanced from Vesoul to Langres, and waited in the latter position until the Prussian army, which had crossed the Rhine above Mentz, at Oppenheim, Worms, and Manheim, and below it from Bingen to Coblentz, should have been collected and have reached the Moselle, and until a communication had been opened with it, previously to making any forward movement.

This Prussian army, which was marching under the orders of General Blucher, advanced by Kaiserslautern, Saarbruck, Château-Salins and Saint-Avold. Leaving Metz on its right, it proceeded by way of Vic in the direction of Nancy, Pont-à-Mousson, and Toul. On reaching this position the hostile

armies were in line; but they never would have dared to effect that movement through so many fortified places, if the Emperor had been possessed of one third of their numbers, and wielded it in such a manner as to assume at once the offensive by throwing himself in the midst of these fortified towns. Had fortune kept that resource in reserve for him, we should then have beheld the extinction of many military renowns, and that triumvirate of eagles which came to prey upon the French eagle would have been driven back in all the directions in which it had penetrated into the French territory.

There is no doubt that the Emperor might have had such an army at his command, if the negotiations with Spain had been carried on with that activity so imperiously called for by the crisis which had given rise to them. There was yet sufficient time left to conclude them, and to bring up our troops; it will presently be seen why this last plank of safety was not made available.

On receiving the news of the simultaneous invasion of the French territory at so many different points, the Emperor's firmness of mind did not forsake him: "I am two months behind-hand," he said; "had I that time at command, they should not have crossed the Rhine. This may be attended with serious consequences; but I can do nothing single-handed. Unless I am assisted, I must fall in the struggle. It will then be seen whether the aggression is directed against me personally."

Great activity was displayed on every side; no effort was neglected; every thing, however, was left unfinished. The invasion struck a general panic; this was not all; besides the moral effect which it produced, it had the further inconvenience of depriving us of the many resources that might have been derived from the warlike populations of the provinces of Alsace, Franche-Comté, and Lorraine. This was the greatest evil, and the most severely felt.

The utmost tranquillity reigned in France; not the slightest spark of agitation could be discovered: the people suffered with perfect resignation; they longed for the termination of such heavy calamities, but no one attempted to create a disturbance.

The Emperor was pleased at this internal state of things; but he found that his battalions did not augment their numerical strength, and that the enemy was still advancing.

He ordered that the troops which were retreating by the two roads of Metz and Strasburg should assemble at Châlons-sur-Marne, and he sent off at the same time the imperial guard in the direction of Arcis-sur-Aube.

The theatre of operations had not yet acquired that interest and importance which it came to possess in the months of February and March following.

The Emperor was placed in a very extraordinary position. He had sufficient troops, in the fortified towns of Germany which were still in his possession, wherewith to form a powerful army. He had other troops in some of the fortresses of Holland and Belgium; and ever since the invasion of the territory, most of the towns of the old frontier had received garrisons to defend them. Independently of eight thousand men in Antwerp, there were ten thousand men in Wesel, and twelve or fifteen thousand in Mentz. In Italy, moreover, there was an army, but hardly strong enough to defend itself in case of an attack. Rome was occupied by a small corps; another protected Florence; two corps were fighting on the frontiers of Spain—the one in Roussillon, the other under the walls of Bayonne. Lastly, the Emperor, with an inconsiderable army, was protecting Paris from the attacks of the whole of Europe; and each of his movements told with powerful effect.

None but the first sovereigns of Europe could have under arms as many troops as the Emperor had still at his command, though scattered about in the several directions I have named. Had it been possible for him to assume the offensive

at an earlier moment, he would have caused the garrisons to join him, one after the other, in regular succession, with the exception of those which were so far removed that they no longer took any part in the war.

It is much to be deplored, that a hero who was struggling with so much courage against misfortunes, should not have been better seconded. It had become habitual, as I have already stated, to depend upon the Emperor's attending to and directing every branch of the service. He had, in some measure, encouraged every one in this inattention; the consequence was, that all duties were performed mechanically, as they extended no farther than the literal execution of his orders; a task the less arduous, as it called for no stretch or combinations of mind; nothing beyond a ready and strict compliance.

If the Emperor had been aided by any one competent to rise to the height of his conceptions, all the troops at his command in the fortresses beyond the Rhine would have been set in motion as far back as the month of December, when the allied army was approaching Switzerland. This would have been a natural consequence of the principle, that the garrisons of fortified towns are destined to keep an enemy's army in check after the loss of a battle, or to favour any movement of the army intended for their relief. It was reasonable to suppose that the garrisons of all those places would have been collected together; and had this been done, they would have presented a mass sufficient to attract the attention of the hostile army, and compel it to act with more circumspection, since it had not shown any apprehension of the fortified places in their isolated character, and had left them in its rear.

The minister of war could not have forgotten that he had, since the loss of the battle of Leipsic, delivered important letters to my care for Marshal Davout at Hamburgh, and

that I had succeeded in forwarding them through England to their destination.

It needed no effort of genius to determine what ought to have been done for the service of the Emperor and of France in the present emergency: it would have been sufficient to bear in mind that this prince had, in 1806, moved from the borders of the Mein to the Oder in less than two months; that after compelling the whole Prussian army to capitulate in the open field, he had arrived beyond the Vistula before the expiration of the third month of the campaign, dating from the time of his departure from Mentz.

It was possible, therefore, for the troops upon the Oder and the Elbe to reach the Rhine during the months of December, January, and February. The line of communications was not so much obstructed as to prevent the adoption of this course: it is for those who neglected it to explain their reasons. I can assert that it was so much the Emperor's intention to command such a movement, that he was under the impression of having issued instructions to that effect; and did me the honour to write me word that his orders were no longer obeyed. It was only after the receipt of this letter that the Duke of Feltre sent me a few paper balls, to forward to the commanders of all the garrisons shut up in the fortified towns. These were orders written upon such small slips, that when rolled up they were not larger than a bean. I was guilty of the indiscretion of opening one of them, which only contained these words:—"Monsieur le Général,—The Emperor complains that you do not give the enemy sufficient employment." I must acknowledge I was deeply mortified that nothing more should have been written to general officers, whose services might have been of so much importance to the cause.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Duke of Vicenza is refused admission at the enemies' advanced posts—Meeting of plenipotentiaries at Châtillon-sur-Seine—Murat—Napoleon's opinion of this prince—He cannot credit his defection—M. de la Vauguyon—M. de Laharpe—Conversation respecting his pupil—Organization of the national guard.

NOTWITHSTANDING such acts of oversight and neglect, the allied army, with the three principal sovereigns of Europe at its head, made its approaches with the utmost circumspection, so apprehensive was it that some unforeseen manœuvre might on a sudden spread disorganization amongst its columns. The Emperor remained another month in Paris, where, had he exchanged places with the chiefs of the coalition, he would unquestionably have arrived in a fortnight. During this interval he husbanded all the resources upon which he could rely, and sent off the Duke of Vicenza to the head-quarters of the Emperor Alexander, rather with the view of gratifying the impatience of those who were of opinion that it entirely rested with him to make peace, than with any expectation that the Duke would succeed in opening pacific negotiations. He gave him such instructions as denote at once the desire he felt to terminate a disastrous war, and the fixed determination rather to descend from the throne, than subscribe to a disgraceful peace. Those instructions were as follows:—"I have great doubts of the good faith of the allies, and of England's being desirous of peace. I am anxious for it, but it must be a solid and an honourable one. France without her natural limits, without Ostend or Antwerp, would no longer be in harmony with the other powers of Europe. They, as well as England, have all admitted those limits at Frankfort. The conquests beyond

the Rhine cannot compensate for the acquisitions made by Austria, Russia, and Prussia in Poland, and in Finland, or the English encroachments in Asia. The conduct of Austria will be influenced by the policy of England, and the hatred of the Emperor of Russia. I have accepted the bases of Frankfort; but it is probable that the allies have no longer the same views. Their proposals have been nothing more than a mark to disguise them. When once the system is adopted, of allowing the negotiations to be influenced by military events, it is impossible to foresee its consequences. You must listen to and observe every thing. It is not quite certain that you may be received at head-quarters. The Russians and the English will endeavour to obstruct every means of offering explanations to, and of conciliating the Emperor of Austria. You must endeavour to ascertain the views of the allies, and make me a daily report of what you may learn, so as to enable me to give you instructions, which I should be at a loss to establish upon any basis at the present moment. Is there any intention of confining France within her old limits? This would be degrading her.....

" It is a mistake to suppose that the evils of war can make a nation desirous of such a peace. There is not a French heart that would not feel the disgrace of it before six months had expired, and reproach any government that could be so dastardly as to affix its signature to it. Italy is yet untouched; the viceroy commands a fine army; before the lapse of a week I shall have collected forces sufficient to fight many battles, even before the arrival of my troops from Spain. The desolations caused by the Cossacks will have the effect of arming the inhabitants, and of doubling our forces. If I should be seconded by the nation, the enemy are hastening to their own ruin; if fortune should betray me, my determination is already formed: *I am not wedded to the throne.* I will neither disgrace the nation nor myself, by subscribing dishonourable conditions. We must know

what are M. de Metternich's demands. It is not the interest of Austria to drive matters to extremity: the next step she takes, she ceases to act the first part. In this state of things, I can give you no instructions. Confine yourself for the present to listening to and reporting every thing. I am about to proceed to the army. You will be so near at hand, that your first reports will occasion no delay in the further progress of affairs. Send frequent couriers to me.

"Whereupon, &c.

"NAPOLEON.

"Paris, 4th January, 1814."

The Emperor was not mistaken: the allies wished for nothing more than a semblance of negotiations. The Duke of Vicenza was refused admittance. He stopped at Luneville, where the hostile forces were stationed; opened a communication with Metternich, and urged in vain to be allowed to proceed. The reason alleged was, that affairs ought to follow their usual course. Great stress was laid upon the necessity of a right understanding; of holding a consultation; and the French plenipotentiary was allowed to waste his time to no purpose for the space of sixteen days in the town of Luneville.

Nevertheless the Emperor of Austria continued to correspond with Maria Louisa, assuring her of his tenderness, and of his determination, *whatever might be the turn of events, never to separate the cause of his daughter and grandson from that of France.* As this might possibly bear allusion to some projects of other powers in favour of the Bourbons, the Emperor directed the Duke of Vicenza to hold a confidential intercourse with Metternich, and again reminded him of the views and considerations which ought to guide him in the discussion of the great interests confided to his care. "France was to preserve her natural limits; this condition was a *sine quâ non.* All the powers of Europe, he continued, including

England, had acknowledged those bases at Frankfort. France once reduced to her old limits, would not now possess two-thirds of the relative power she possessed twenty years back; what she has acquired towards the Alps and the Rhine does not compensate for what Russia, Austria, and Prussia, have acquired by the mere act of the partition of Poland. All those powers have aggrandised themselves. To pretend to bring France back to her former state, would be to lower and degrade her. France would be nothing without the departments of the Rhine, without Belgium, Ostend, or Antwerp. The system of reducing France to her old limits is inseparably connected with the restoration of the Bourbons, because they alone could offer a guarantee for the maintenance of that system; and England was fully aware of the fact. With any one else, peace on such a basis would be impossible, or could never last. Neither the Emperor, nor the republic, if it should spring out anew from this state of agitation, could ever subscribe such a condition. As to what concerns his Majesty; he has taken his determination, which nothing can affect. Could he consent to leave France less powerful than he found her? If therefore the allies should pretend to alter the bases already accepted, and propose the former limits, the Emperor has only the choice of three courses: either to fight and conquer; to die honourably in the struggle; or, lastly, to abdicate, if the nation should not support him. The throne had no charms for him; he would never attempt to purchase it at the price of dishonour. The English might be desirous of depriving him of Antwerp; but this would not be the interest of the Continent, as a peace founded upon such a basis would not last three years. He felt the difficulty of his position, but he would never accept of a disgraceful peace. By admitting the bases already proposed, he made every direct sacrifice that he could consistently subscribe to; if any more were required, they could only have reference to Italy and Holland. He was no doubt desirous of exclud-

ing the Stadtholder; but if France retained her natural limits, every thing might be arranged, nor would any insurmountable obstacles be thrown in the way."

The hostile armies had continued their movements. The third part of France was invaded, when the Duke of Vicenza received from the enemy's head-quarters an authority to proceed to Châtillon-sur-Seine. The ministers of the allied sovereigns, Lords Aberdeen and Stewart for England, Count Razoumowski for Russia, M. de Stadion for Austria, and M. de Humboldt for Prussia, likewise repaired to that town.

The Emperor was prepared, as I have stated, for the objection raised to M. de Caulaincourt. Nevertheless, he hazarded an unexpected course, and sanctioned the proposal of a suspension of arms. The coalition refused, and thus left him to the resources of his courage. He prepared to assume the offensive with an army of about sixty thousand men against four or five hundred thousand, who were manœuvring on the point where he was stationed. To add to his misfortunes, the King of Naples had just thrown off the mask. This event was attended with circumstances of so painful a nature, that I cannot avoid relating them.

Ever since the sudden return of the King of Naples to his dominions, the correspondence from that country as well as from Rome spoke in confident terms of the intelligence kept up between the Neapolitan government and the agents of England. I cannot positively assert that the Emperor had demanded any explanation from him respecting these extraordinary rumours; but I took care not to keep him in ignorance of the smallest information which I received on the subject. He felt reluctant to believe in the reports. He even did me the honour to tell me one day that he could not give credit to every thing that was stated to me, since M. Fouché, whom he had sent to the King of Naples, not only did not speak this language, but vouched on the contrary for the King's friendly sentiments, which he was the more disposed

to rely on, as the Prince continued writing to him, and making protestations of his allegiance and unshaken attachment.

"He is not gifted with much penetration," added the Emperor; "but he would be very short-sighted indeed if he could expect to remain where he is when I am gone, or when he shall have been wanting in duty to me, supposing I should triumph over my present difficulties."

Nevertheless, the letters from Rome soon informed us of the passage of M. Fouché through that city onhis way from Naples to join the Princess Eliza in Tuscany. A few days afterwards they announced the entrance of the Neapolitan troops into Rome under the orders of General Carascosa and of General La Vauguyon, who commanded the body-guard of the King of Naples.

The latter summoned the French authorities to suspend their functions, as he was taking possession of Rome and of its territory in the name of the King of Naples.

The civil authorities evacuated Rome, and withdrew to Florence. General Miollis, who commanded the garrison, shut himself up in the castle of St. Angelo, with part of the troops which occupied the Roman states: the remainder took the road to Tuscany.

General La Vauguyon, who acted a conspicuous part in this defection, is the son of the ambassador from France to the Spanish court under Louis XVI.

The King of Spain gave hospitality to that family, and loaded it with favours during the revolutionary storms. He had placed General La Vauguyon in his army, when he was yet but a boy. This officer quitted the service of Spain in 1807, joined the French army after the battle of Eylau, and solicited employment. He had no claim to the attention of the Emperor, who nevertheless gave him the appointment of aide-de-camp to the King of Naples, then Grand-duke of Berg, restored to him a part of his family property, which was yet unsold, and granted moreover large sums of money to M.

de Carignan, because he was on the point of marrying a young lady of the family of La Vauguyon. The next year M. de La Vauguyon followed the Grand-duke of Berg to Naples; and, by way of showing his gratitude to the Emperor, he finished by placing himself at the head of the troops which were marching to attack us.

The King of Naples did not confine himself to the occupation of Rome; he advanced from thence into Italy, united his troops to the Austrian forces which were attacking Prince Eugene, and was not ashamed to disgrace by such sacrilegious conduct the very cradle of his glory.

This king was ambitious of being mistaken for a Chevalier Bayard. He made great affectation of a straightforward conduct, was always in quest of danger, unsparing of his person, and even ambitious of attracting attention by the peculiarity of his costume. Never was any tragic actor bedecked in such accoutrements. He was not contented with the costume of Henry IV., or of Tancrede; it was his daily employment to make out some novelty in dress. It was a great pity that a sister of the Emperor, who possessed wit, beauty, and the talent of attraction, should have desired, almost against the wishes of her family, to unite her destiny to that of a man whose merit and reputation were not of the highest order at the period of her marrying him. This alliance had been the means of raising him to the throne; and yet he was not satisfied. What more could he wish for? What could he expect to accomplish by taking up arms against his benefactor?

Events were now crowding upon us with great rapidity; and the Emperor thought he could no longer remain in Paris. Previously to his departure, I had to confer with him respecting an application made to me for a passport by M. de La Harpe, an old tutor of the Emperor of Russia, afterwards member of the directory of the Helvetic republic, who was desirous of going to Switzerland. I reported the cir-

cumstance to the Emperor, who authorised me to grant the passport.

M. de La Harpe called upon me, and we had a long conversation together respecting Russia and his pupil. I did not disguise from him my opinion that he would see him on his way through Troyes, where the Emperor would probably be on his arrival. I told him that the character of the war seemed to have reserved a splendid part for the Emperor Alexander to act, and presented him with an opportunity of offering peace on terms as generous as those he had himself received at Tilsit, when his affairs were in a desperate condition. He could not be ignorant that peace was anxiously desired by the country he had inundated with his soldiers; and none but a madman could suppose the Emperor Napoleon to be indifferent to the termination of the war. He no doubt mistrusted the language which the hostile armies had sent forth previously to making their appearance: but I, who was well aware of the sincerity of his desire to make peace, could only draw the worst inference from the unfriendly reception given to the Duke of Vicenza, since Europe had not yet forgotten the manner in which the Emperor acted towards Alexander when the latter, having crossed the Niemen after the battle of Friedland, found himself under the necessity of suing for peace.

I told M. de La Harpe, amongst other things, that although I sincerely hoped I was mistaken, I could not but think that the Emperor Alexander had banished all generosity from his heart; that he had again adopted the views he entertained in 1805, when he took the lead in the aggression of which we had well nigh been the victims: and although he appeared to me to have frankly renounced them after the peace of Tilsit, there was reason to apprehend his having again returned to them. I added, that previously to engaging in the war of 1812, the Emperor Napoleon had never ceased to declare to the Emperor Alexander the desire which he felt

of keeping up the harmony established between them; and in the situation in which the course of events had now brought him, he would assuredly not be the person likely to throw any obstacle in the way of an accommodation.

M. de La Harpe repelled the suspicion as derogatory to the Emperor Alexander's character. He frankly spoke his sentiments on the subject, and must have made some serious reflections upon the conversation we had together after the events had verified my conjectures.

Previously to quitting Paris, the Emperor was desirous of completing the organization of the national guard of Paris, which he had resolved to call to arms. This was the subject of frequent discussions, and was strenuously opposed, because it was generally observed, that the Parisian national guard had been the most powerful weapon in the hands of political agitators during the revolutionary frenzy, and that it was dangerous to give them any longer the power to wield it. Circumstances were certainly altered, and it was hoped that the times were also changed. There was nothing, however, to warrant so much confidence. But the necessity which was felt of recurring to the inhabitants for the defence of the capital was productive of a state of illusion respecting certain truths, which upon calm reflection were palpable to every one: independently of which, there was less opposition to the levy of the national guard of Paris, than difficulty in composing it of men who might be above suspicion in case of any disturbance, and equally well inclined to defend the ramparts of the city and protect their private dwellings.

It was almost impossible to find these two qualities combined; because the men most adapted to the defence of a town are invariably found amongst those who display the best feelings, and are the most lavish of exertions, and the most indifferent to danger. They are the less wealthy part of the community, have nothing to lose, and are foremost in obeying the call of national honour: but they were considered

as likely to intimidate the opulent class and the landed proprietors; and it was, accordingly, in contemplation not to include them in the lists.

Opinions were so much divided, that the Emperor would neither renounce altogether the availing himself of a resource of which he stood in need, nor yet employ it until he had first heard the expression of every sentiment, and considered the differences which the several opinions could not fail to bring to light. He accordingly called together a privy council, composed of the members I have already had occasion to mention, and who amounted to eighteen or twenty persons.* The Emperor stated the question as to the necessity of calling to arms the national guard of Paris, and allowed a free course to all the observations developed respecting the inconveniences which might result from again placing arms in the hands of that part of the population. The subject was much debated. All the acts of the national guard during the remarkable periods of the revolution were brought forward, and the general opinion prevailed that it ought not to be placed under arms. The Emperor replied to all these observations, that the case was one of absolute necessity; and that they should, therefore, only attend to the question as to the mode of selection to be adopted in composing it; but that the urgency of the danger required its being called out.

He allowed the discussion to continue another hour, and then put the proposition to the vote. It was noticed as a remarkable circumstance, that all the members of the council who had acquired any celebrity during the revolution were at first of opinion that the national guard should not be called out; and that when they were afterwards obliged to

* The princes of the Imperial family, the three dignitaries, the ministers, the ministers of state, the presidents of the sections of the Council of State, the president of the Senate, the grand-master of the University, and the first inspector of the gendarmerie.

yield the point, they recommended that no particular selection should be made in drawing up the lists.

The other members of the council voted that the national guard should be armed; but that a superintendence should be exercised over the nomination of the chiefs who were to command that city militia. The Emperor adopted this advice, and, in conformity with it, he gave orders for placing the national guard of Paris under arms. I had only to carry into effect the measures consequent upon this decision, which had been prepared beforehand. The council did not separate until three o'clock in the morning.

CHAPTER XXVII.

M. de Talleyrand—The Emperor refuses to send him into confinement—Expressions attributed to him—Presentation of the officers of the national guard—The King of Rome—The Emperor's address to the officers of the national guard—Its effect.

The Emperor was constantly warned of the underhand dealings of M. de Talleyrand. Facts were alleged; intrigues were pointed out; and great stress was laid upon the fatal consequences which might result from too great a display of generosity. The Emperor listened to the reports; felt indignant at the audacity of the diplomatist; and yet could not take upon himself to act with severity. The question appeared to him to be of far too serious a nature to be solved by any other means than victory; and he no doubt fancied that he could allow intrigues to run on, which a favourable turn of fortune would infallibly crush. An attempt was made by a person wholly devoted to his interests to convince him of his error. "You are certainly," he said, "without any positive

facts to proceed upon; but you cannot deceive yourself as to the reality of the projects which he is revolving in his mind. This is too tempting an opportunity, and he will not be able to resist it. On the approach of any fête or ceremony that was expected to attract great crowds, M. de Sartine always sent for the ambiguous characters over whom he had been exercising a strict watch, and addressed them in these words:—"I have no reproach to make to you; but to-morrow perhaps you might deserve it. Habit might resume her empire; you might yield to temptation; and I should be compelled to act with severity. It is as much for your interest as for mine that you should avoid the possibility of doing that which would be productive of unpleasant consequences to you: repair therefore to such a house of detention." They obeyed; all passed off quietly, and no one was brought into danger. The Emperor applauded the contrivance, but refused to resort to it. "Never," he said to the dignitary who threw out the hint, "never will I consent to the ruin of a man who has long been of service to me." On the other hand, however, he was unsparing of reproaches to him. M. de Talleyrand was one day after mass in the saloon with the arch-chancellor, the Prince of Neufchatel, and myself. The Emperor grew warm, and said the most bitter things to him. M. de Talleyrand bore this painful scene with great presence of mind, though the Emperor was on the point of adopting the violent measures he had hitherto abstained from. "We shall see," said he, in a sudden transport of passion, "let M. de Bassano come in."

The Duke had unfortunately retired, and could not be found. The Emperor composed himself, and the Prince of Benevento escaped with this burst of anger. The sovereign had uttered severe words against him; and accordingly the reports thenceforward succeeded each other with greater rapidity. Not a day passed without some guilty expression reaching the Emperor's ears. Matters had gone so far, that on the day after the council was held relative to calling out

the national guard, a stock-exchange rumour was brought back to him, which had occasioned a rise in the funds. The report was current that immediately after the breaking-up of the council, it had been said at M. de Talleyrand's hotel that none but jacobins had opposed the arming of the citizens of Paris, it having been their intention to renew the scenes in which they had formerly taken the lead. This expression might have been uttered, but assuredly not by M. de Talleyrand in the circumstances under which it was ascribed to him. I felt anxious to ascertain the fact; and it was proved that at three o'clock in the morning, the hour of his return, there was no one in his hotel ;* that he went to bed immediately; and that the stock-exchange was shut the next day before his bed-curtains had been drawn.

After the scene I have just related, M. de Talleyrand was no longer warranted in expecting any favour from the Emperor. He consigned his papers to the flames, removed every thing that was calculated to expose him to danger, and redoubled his exertions to escape the fate to which his intrigues were likely to expose him.

The Emperor remained ten or twelve days longer in Paris, for the purpose of receiving the oath of allegiance from the officers of the national guard. The ceremony took place in the apartment called the saloon of the marshals.

During mass, Madame de Montesquiou, who was the governess of the King of Rome, received orders to carry the young prince to the Emperor's apartment. She obeyed: divine service went on; and when the Emperor was on the point of quitting the chapel, he again sent orders that the child should be brought to the door of the saloon adjoining that of the marshals, and into the latter apartment at the moment

* Madame de Brignolet was the person who retired last from M. de Talleyrand's saloon, upwards of an hour previous to his return from the Tuileries.

of his entering it himself, on his return from the chapel, through the opposite door.

When mass was over, the Emperor retired with the Empress, who, on other occasions, generally preceded him. He entered the saloon of the marshals: the opposite door opened at the same moment; and Madame de Montesquiou walked in with the young king in her arms. Every one was taken by surprise, and at a loss to know the meaning of what was now going forward.

The Emperor had the child placed on the ground, and taking him by one hand, whilst the Empress held the other, he advanced into the circle of officers of the national guard, who lined the saloon of the marshals. From the novelty of the sight, and the respect which it could not fail to inspire, the most perfect silence pervaded the assembly.

The Emperor spoke as follows:—"Officers of the national guard of the city of Paris, I am pleased at seeing you about my person. It is my intention to take my departure this very night, and place myself at the head of the army. On quitting the capital, I feel no hesitation in leaving in the midst of you my wife and child, in whom are centred all my hopes. I owed you this mark of confidence in return for the many you have so constantly given me during the eventful periods of my life. I depart with a mind free from uneasiness, knowing that they are under your protection. I leave with you, and commit to your care, what, after France, is dearest to me in the world.

"It may happen that, in consequence of the manœuvres I am about to carry into effect, the enemy may find a moment for approaching your walls. Should such an occurrence come to pass, recollect that it can only be for a few days, and that I will soon come to your assistance. I recommend that you be all united, and that you resist all insinuations, the tendency of which would be to sow disunion amongst you.

Attempts will be made to shake your obedience to your duties; but I rely upon you to repel all such perfidious suggestions."

The Emperor was affected as he spoke to the officers of the national guard; and he was on the point of terminating his address, when, taking his son in his arms, he walked round the circle of those officers, who were unable to resist the sight, and burst into continued acclamations of *Long live the Emperor! Long live the Empress! Long live the King of Rome!* He remained a long time with them after the Empress and the King of Rome had retired to their apartment; and could entertain no other feelings but those of satisfaction and hope, when he beheld such a burst of enthusiasm. No one, in fact, of the company present, could have formed the most distant idea of what came to pass in little more than two months afterwards.

The Emperor's circle that night, which was the 21st of January, 1814, was composed of the company who enjoyed the favour of private admissions: he withdrew at an early hour, saying to those who were near him—"Farewell, gentlemen, we shall perhaps meet again." I had the honour of being in his society that night; and fell a prey to the deepest despondency, when I beheld him taking what to my mind appeared a last farewell.

The regency and its council had been organised in the same manner as during the preceding campaign. The Emperor set off at midnight on his way to Châlons-sur-Marne.

At no period of history had France found herself in so critical a situation. It is inconceivable that, with so small an army, the Emperor should for so long a time have kept hostile forces in check, which might easily have reached the capital by boldly marching forward; and their only reason for not having done so at once may be, that they wished to combine the progress of their military operations with some

projects, the tendency of which was to disorganise the system of government established in France. I was always struck with the conviction, that the Emperor had seen through their intentions on that subject, and that this was his principal motive for refusing to give credit to any sincere desire for peace on their part. I also thought that he then regretted not having concluded peace at Dresden, previously to the Emperor of Russia's acquiring that influence which had raised him to become the arbiter of the wishes of every European power.

Lord Castlereagh, the British minister, had scarcely quitted England to repair to the allied army, when the princes of the house of Bourbon began to set themselves in motion. The Count d'Artois followed the same road as Lord Castlereagh, and came as far as Vesoul in Franche-Comté ; the Duke d'Angoulême, his eldest son, proceeded by sea to join the head-quarters of the Marquis of Wellington, who was at St. Jean de Luz, in the neighbourhood of Bayonne ; and the Duke de Berry, his second son, came to the island of Jersey, which is near the coasts of Normandy and Brittany. The presence of these princes on the French territory gave rise to profound meditations respecting the enemy's views ; and afforded likewise a proof of the determination taken not to yield to the entreaties of our foes, by altering our government at their bidding.

Each of the princes was attended by one or two French emigrants, who endeavoured to raise for them a party, and to rekindle in the minds of the French people their old attachment for the house of Bourbon ; but their efforts were unsuccessful, as the following details will not fail to prove.

They had so few partisans in France, that every one was secretly injuring their cause. M. de Talleyrand himself was one of the most eager to acquaint me with what information he had acquired on the subject of the individuals of the Count d'Artois' suite, and of the stir making by the Marquis de

La Salle, who had been banished to Châtillon-sur-Seine; from whence he was overrunning the province of Burgundy with the view to create a general rising.

I had succeeded in having an agent very near the person of the Duke d'Angoulême, and obtained correct information of every report he addressed to the King; they were by no means of a satisfactory nature, and held out very slender hopes of success to their cause. The Emperor was made acquainted with this state of things, and he no doubt caused explanations to be demanded at Châtillon respecting a conduct which was calculated to raise doubts on the expressions put forth of a desire to conclude peace. It appears that his demand was not unattended to; since he received for reply, that the allies had signified to the princes of the house of Bourbon the order to withdraw. These underhand practices proved detrimental to the cause of the allies: their intentions were seen through; the confidence hitherto placed in their peaceful language vanished; and there is no doubt that if the Emperor had obtained the least success, had some longer time been allowed him, he would have roused the national energies, now that the people began to see through the enemy's deceitful proceedings.

Schwartzenberg was advancing upon Paris by the way of Burgundy, and Blucher by Champagne. I felt some apprehension for the Pope, who was still at Fontainebleau, and hastened to ask the Emperor what course I was to adopt in this emergency.

The Emperor had just learned fresh details respecting the conduct of the King of Naples, who had joined his troops to the Austrians, and was marching in person against the Viceroy of Italy. He ordered me to send the Pope and cardinals back immediately to Rome, not allowing them, however, to pass through the countries already occupied by the allies; and to write to the Viceroy of Italy, as well as to Prince Borghese, to acquaint them with this arrangement. The holy father

passed through the province of Berry, and the towns of Toulouse, Avignon, Grenoble, and Chamberry; the cardinals following in his suite. The whole *cortége* was handed over to the Austrian advanced-posts in the vicinity of Parma, and reached Rome just in time to drive out the Neapolitan authorities. Sound policy dictated this measure, which ought to have been adopted two months before.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Emperor's arrival at the camp—Encounters at Brienne, Champaubert, &c.—Capture of La Fère and Soissons—Marshal Victor—Consequences of his inactivity—Fresh deputation of traitors to the Emperor Alexander—State of Paris.

THE Emperor, on arriving at Châlons, had ordered an immediate attack upon the Prussian army, which was advancing by the road of Toul, and had driven them beyond Saint-Dizier. During this movement, however, the Austrian and Russian army, which was also advancing by the road of Troyes, proceeded as far as the conflux of the rivers Yonne and Seine: crossed the former by the bridge of Montereau, and pushed forward a corps of eight or ten thousand men to the town of Fontainebleau, of which it took possession.

The troops withdrawn from the army in Spain were fortunately on the point of arriving. They received an order to pass through Orleans and Etampes, so as to fall in with the Paris road at Fontainebleau. The enemy, however, did not wait for them, but traced back their steps.

After penetrating beyond Saint-Dizier, the Emperor set his right wing in motion, with the view of falling upon the rear of all the troops that had marched towards Paris through the province of Burgundy. The enemy had likewise made a move-

ment with the intention of coming up with him; and a very severe action took place at Brienne, which was carried, but almost immediately retaken by the enemy. Some disorder took place; which was followed by the burning of Brienne, according to the Russian fashion. The resistance experienced at Brienne occasioned a loss of time to the Emperor, which he hoped to have bestowed upon other operations. The corps of General Blucher had been re-organised: it was still in good condition, and again marched to Châlons, where it took the old road leading to Paris by Etoges and Montmirail. This movement compelled the Emperor to draw nearer to the river Seine, in order to afford better protection to one of his flanks. Whilst in this position he was joined by the troops coming from Spain, and suddenly moved off with them and with his guard, leaving Marshals Macdonald and Oudinot to keep the enemy in check. He passed through the cross-road leading from Coulommiers to Sezanne, and fell upon the flanks of the Russian and Prussian corps, which were in full march for Paris. This movement brought on the two actions of Champaubert and Montmirail; in which the Emperor cut to pieces the Russian corps under General Sacken, as well as a Prussian corps, both which might otherwise have been in Paris by the 15th of February. He pursued them beyond Château-Thierry. Ten or twelve thousand men were taken prisoners on these two occasions, and brought to Paris. The population of the country where the engagements had been fought, wreaked their vengeance upon the enemy's stragglers, and put a great number to death. Had it been possible to distribute arms, there is no doubt that similar scenes would have occurred from one extremity of France to the other.

The enemy withdrew from Château-Thierry partly towards Epernay, from whence they reached Châlons, and partly towards Soissons, which had just been carried. The enemy's troops which had crossed the Rhine towards Wesel and Cologne penetrated through Belgium, entered France by way

of Liege and Beaumont, and were advancing through Rethel, Rheims, and Soissons. The Emperor had issued orders for placing the last-named town in a state of defence, though it had ceased for upwards of two centuries to be considered as a place of importance in a military point of view. The ramparts had been hastily lined with some pieces of cannon drawn from La Fère, and by means of a few palisadoes it had been placed in a respectable attitude of defence. But an evil spirit was already infusing itself in our armies; wherever the Emperor's presence was wanting, we were no better than those armies we had so often driven like clouds of dust before us.

The enemy approached the Aisne, and summoned the town of La Fère, which actually surrendered under the unaccountable pretence that it was not a fortress, but a school of artillery, and ought not to expose the inhabitants or their properties to danger by a defence which was not to be expected from a town of its class and condition. The enemy found in it sufficient warlike resources to enable them to capture Soissons, which they carried by main force, and gave up to the most dreadful plunder. This event greatly thwarted the Emperor's views; he immediately advanced in the direction of the town, as he happened to be in its vicinity, replaced a garrison in it with some pieces of cannon, and proceeded at once by forced marches to outflank the right of the enemy's grand army, which had made a forward movement as soon as it had learned the Emperor's departure for Montmirail. The two marshals, who were directed to keep that army in check, had prudently determined to retire without exposing themselves to unnecessary danger. The Emperor overtook them near Provins, ordered an attack upon Montereau-sur-Yonne, carried it by main force, and caused the bridge to be restored and the enemy to be vigorously pursued on the road to Sens. In the mean while the corps of Marshal Victor, which, in consequence of the direction given to it, was arriving at Bray-sur-Seine, below Nogent, had orders immediately to cross the river and

move on the high road to Sens, which was already covered with the enemy's retreating columns. There is no doubt that if this corps had carried its instructions into effect, the enemy's grand army would have been thrown into a most dreadful disorder, and have lost a considerable number of prisoners. The officers of their own staff have since admitted it, adding that some doubt had been entertained for a moment as to whether directions would not be issued for drawing nearer to the Rhine; when however it was found that the French troops which were to act upon the upper Seine did not cross the river, the determination was taken to give up the idea of retreating; and the army was restored to proper order.

I have been informed, that at this time the Emperor Alexander received at his head-quarters a fresh deputation of traitors, such as are unfortunately always to be found in a city like Paris; but that he had hesitated to pay attention to the objects submitted for his information, so odious did they appear to him.

Why did not the corps of Marshal Victor do its duty? Unquestionably not through any evil intention; but it may be said, without contesting any of that marshal's good qualities, that he was probably not well aware of the enemy's position; and consequently not sensible of the importance of the service he had it in his power to render. By carrying his troops rapidly across the Seine, on the line of the enemy's retreat, he would have decided their retrograde movement; whereas by suspending his own movement, he prevented the retreat of the enemy and paralysed the Emperor's operations.

Some allowance should also be made for the general lassitude which pervaded all ranks, and created a feeling of indifference to every thing. It was no longer a question what might be done, but how long a political agony might last, the remedy to which appeared hopeless.

This inactivity of Marshal Victor's corps greatly vexed the Emperor, who openly gave vent to these expressions: "I am

no longer obeyed; I am no longer feared; I ought to be every where at one and the same time."

That occurrence was productive of a still more fatal consequence, not only inasmuch as it destroyed the effect of the offensive movement, in which the marshal's corps acted a conspicuous part; but also because the Emperor had so few opportunities left for combining other decisive operations, as to make it still more a subject of regret, that the corps had not been confided to more skilful hands in the favourable moment which had just been suffered to escape. The failure of this enterprise on the upper Seine bore the stamp of our inability to act, since the last resources at our command had been employed in it. No time was lost, therefore, in concluding an armistice, which was only stipulated for a few days' duration; and as there could not be discovered any necessity on the part of the enemy for agreeing to such a measure, fresh hopes of peace began to revive. We are prone to believe in the success of an object we have much at heart; and peace was, therefore, loudly called for on all hands. I have heard it stated by the French general officer who was commissioned to regulate the conditions of that armistice, that if he had received full powers to treat for peace, he would have obtained the limits of the Rhine and the Alpine mountains for boundaries. During the interval of this armistice, care was taken to bring back to the standards the young stragglers who had wandered from their columns during the incessant movements occasioned by so many forced marches: all those that were in the depôts were also collected, and the different branches of the service which had fallen into confusion were re-organised as well as circumstances would permit.

It is proper I should now advert to the then existing political state of the metropolis.

We had reached the beginning of March, and our troops extended as nearly as possible to the river Oise on the one side, and the Aube on the other.

This occupation of the French territory by foreign troops had forced into Paris a prodigious number of people: in the first place, all public functionaries and persons employed in the different branches of the administration; secondly, those French families, who had imagined there was perfect safety for them in taking up their abode in countries which had been annexed to France for nearly fifteen years, but were now quitting them on the first approach of the enemy, and had gradually fallen back to the very capital; and lastly, the natives of those countries, who, having warmly espoused the interests of France, felt apprehensive of the consequences to them of party spirit and of a re-action, and had accordingly followed in the steps of those who had previously quitted their soil.

The feeling of terror, which it was found impossible to remove from the minds of those who had given way to it, had been productive of a contagious effect upon many others, who had also fled: all those who had been removed from Paris, in consequence of certain administrative measures, had returned to it under cover of the existing disorder; and alleged as a reason for so doing, that they might otherwise have been arraigned for remaining in a country occupied by the enemy, and placed, under such a pretence, in a worse position than before. This was the motive of the Archbishop of Mechlin for quitting his diocese; and he was justified in urging it, since it became a matter of necessity for him to adopt that course. Whilst the individuals who had been banished from Paris were returning to it, those who for the same cause had received orders to quit Belgium, availed themselves of the like opportunity to re-enter that country, a circumstance which was productive of a twofold evil. The same inconvenience was found to exist in the eastern and southern departments into which the enemy's troops had penetrated. The administration was almost powerless; every thing was duly reported to it, but such of its orders were evaded as were calculated to entail a responsibility, which it was

already feared to risk, so much was the Emperor's downfall supposed to be near at hand: the public mind was less engaged in the contemplation of our internal affairs, than in endeavouring to calculate upon our future fate in consequence of the progress of the enemy, whom it no longer seemed possible to resist.

It was not without some foundation that the arrival of the Count d'Artois at Vesoul appeared connected with the ulterior views of the allies; and although it was reported that he had been requested by the allies to withdraw, nevertheless the agitation was kept up by his return to that town, which almost immediately afterwards became known. It was likewise well known that the Duke d'Angoulême was at the head-quarters of the English army at Saint Jean de Luz; but the want of courtesy shown to him by the general-in-chief of that army, a fact notorious to all the inhabitants of the southern provinces, prevented any impression of the allied powers entertaining the idea of subverting the government established in France, and replacing on the throne the old dynasty, who appeared to be made use of in no other light than as a political engine.

An extraordinary, but purely accidental circumstance had placed at my disposal a French agent, whom M. de Blacas, then in London, had sent through France to the Duke d'Angoulême. I had been apprised from London itself of his intended journey, and caused him to be arrested. He confessed every thing; and in order to escape with advantage to himself, he determined to make money out of both parties. I allowed him to go and come as often as he pleased, attaching as I did much more importance to any news relating to the Duke d'Angoulême than to whatever he might report to the Duke from the interior of France. This could be of very little service to a prince who had no other resources than what the enemy's army presented to him. Through this channel I became acquainted with the greater part of the reports addressed by the Duke d'Angoulême to the King in London,

where he still resided: and as I could have no reason to suspect his imposing upon him, those reports proved to me how slight were the Duke d'Angoulême's hopes of success, and how little flattering was the reception he met with in every quarter, not excepting Lord Wellington, the general-in-chief. By the same reports, I learned that MM. Ravez and Lainé were apprehensive of waiting upon the Duke d'Angoulême in the open day, and that if M. de la Rochejaquelein had not clandestinely introduced them through a window in the night-time, they would not have ventured to present themselves. My reliance upon those reports was founded upon the circumstance of Lord Wellington himself having stated at St. Jean de Luz, in allusion to the Duke d'Angoulême, that he had received no instruction from his government to foment a civil war in France; that he never should promote by his assistance any plan which would expose the people to the severest misfortunes; the less so as negotiations were still going on at Châtillon; but that if a peace did not follow the suspension of arms, the Emperor should then be vigorously assailed on all sides.

I invariably allowed the reports directed from St. Jean de Luz to the King in London to reach their destination, after taking copies of them, which I transmitted to the Emperor. The calamities of war were deeply felt throughout France; but the public tranquillity remained undisturbed: every thing was patiently expected from the course of events, which it was found impossible to arrest.

In Brittany, and even in the western departments, no attempt had been made to disturb the order of things which had existed since the close of the civil war, or the obedience due to the government. Nevertheless, the Duke de Berry was at Jersey, near the coast of Brittany; and as there had been for a long time a system of espionage organised between Saint-Malo and the islands under the dominion of England, there were means of ascertaining whatever might be con-

templated in behalf of this prince by the old leaders of the royalist party in that province. But although it appears from what afterwards came to my knowledge, that the chief commissary of police had long since betrayed the trust reposed in him, he failed to create any internal commotion. In this, as in every other part of France, the issue of events was patiently expected; and no desire was felt to run into additional dangers, until it should be known with what probability of success a fresh enterprise might be attempted.

The very province to which the Count d'Artois had repaired, gave no indication of a rise; and the attentions paid to him were such only as could not be refused without danger, because the inhabitants of that province in particular who had seen the hostile armies marching through, were much better able to form a just estimate of their superiority: and if they did not pronounce themselves more loudly in favour of the old dynasty, they were withheld by the circumstance that the allied sovereigns had not yet expressed their own sentiments. A feeling of uneasiness was now prevailing in Paris far beyond what had ever been witnessed. How in fact could it be otherwise than that politics should engross the whole of the conversation? Was it possible then to conceal from its numerous population the impending dangers? They were no doubt greatly exaggerated by fear; and no fixed opinion could be formed, as no means of escaping them was found to exist.

The people met every where, in the saloons of society as well as in the shops and public places; every report was handed about which was most calculated to damp the few remaining hopes. The several gradations into which the population continued to be divided had, by their re-action upon each other, dispelled all remaining traces of that public energy which was so much needed in the present crisis.

CHAPTER XXIX.

State of the capital—Various idle rumours—Committees—Plot against the Emperor's life—The secretary of M. d'Albert—M. de Vitrolle—Calculation of M. Anglès—The Emperor Alexander and General Reynier.

I HAVE already stated that the capital had become almost the only point free from the irruptions of light troops, with their attendant evils. Families had fled for shelter to within a radius of upwards of thirty leagues round Paris, bringing their furniture and most valuable property along with them: in short, the inhabitants of the neighbouring country had brought to Paris their very cattle, which were crowded in the suburbs. It was difficult to obtain apartments; and concealed recesses were made in every house, for the purpose of hiding whatever was deemed a tempting object for plunder.

In order to form a correct idea of the then situation of Paris, the mind must picture to itself the exhibition presented by the true and false stories circulated in this state of things; the cries in the halls and markets; the conversations kept up in the streets and places of public resort, by idlers and others. The superintendence of the police was wholly unavailing, because its action could be attended with no effect. Any coercive measures would have created a burst of insurrection; and the least relief that could be allowed to so many sufferers was, that they should enjoy the right to complain. There were ample grounds for arrests; but, on principles of strict justice, so many people must have been taken up, that if the prisons had been doubled, they would have been insufficient to maintain those who, more or less, deserved to be placed in confinement.

I have, besides, been always of opinion, that no apprehension need ever be entertained of the mass of the people, so

long as there remains a shadow of public authority. My attention was directed to an object of higher importance.

I had ascertained, that in the very camp some evil intentions had been manifested by superior officers, after the successes obtained at Champaubert. This fact had become known in Paris, where hope had almost vanished. It was only from this moment that those men who had been for the last quarter of a century in the habit of fomenting revolutions, and of taking the lead in every disorder that threatened the public tranquillity, began to conceive the possibility of carrying into effect the visionary dreams to which our disasters had given rise; and that they again set to work as they had done at different periods of the revolution, until the event of the 18th Brumaire. They bethought themselves to look out for elements of discord; and kindled them into a flame, by collecting, exaggerating, and artfully circulating every unfavourable report in the different quarters of the capital; all this was known to the ministry of police. The disposition to mischief was too generally spread to escape the penetration of the most limited understanding; but it also offered so free a scope to agitators of disturbance as to spare them from the danger of exposure by the commission of any act that might have afforded a pretext for arresting them, and for entering upon proceedings which to them might have been productive of fatal results.

It was easy to perceive that the Emperor's adherents were deserting him; but they afforded no means of discovering to what quarter they bent their attention. They maintained the strictest disguise, because negotiations were still going on at Châtillon; and a single word from thence might have destroyed all their projects, and placed them in a situation of the utmost danger.

I was well aware of the existence of some petty committees, which were attended by the Duke d'Alberg, and by M. Anglès, chief of the fourth district of the police, who, in

the council of that department, was foremost in urging violent measures of repression. He had not uttered a word to me respecting that association; but I did not stand in need of his assistance to learn that they wasted their time in mere talk.

These gentlemen had shown every intention to act, and nothing more; but I should certainly have called them to a strict account for it, had matters taken a different turn. The only proceeding of this committee that had any evident character of guilt was, to the best of my recollection, the dispatching M. de Vitrolle to the allied army, for the purpose of ascertaining whether, in their endeavours to promote the cause of the Bourbons, they might hope for support, and be protected from danger.

This course was the more prudent, as any attempt must have been dependent upon the decision of the allies; and it was only after opening a communication with them that the agitators could set to work with any hope of success.

I was of opinion that M. Anglès had only entered into the association with the view of divulging to me its plans, if M. Vitrolle had brought back an unfavourable answer, or of availing himself of any personal advantage it might have afforded him in the contrary case. M. d'Alberg had previously sent his private secretary to the Russian army, where he was to meet M . . . . and General Jomini, with whom the secretary was intimately acquainted. He went to the Russian general whilst at Frankfort on the Maine, and advanced with the hostile army until the moment of its crossing the Rhine. I was informed of his return, and sent for him; when he related many circumstances which, without being entitled to the most unbounded credit, enabled me, nevertheless, to discover that the enemy had it again in contemplation to organise regular communications with Paris. I did not fail to notice, however, that M. d'Alberg's secretary, who had quitted the Russian head-quarters before Lord Castlereagh's arrival,

discredited the existence of any plans in favour of the house of Bourbon, which was never mentioned at the Emperor Alexander's head-quarters.

It was not until the English minister's arrival that such a project was adopted. The object of M. d'Alberg, in dispatching M. de Vitrolle, was to obtain some positive knowledge of the fact. M. Anglès was aware of this journey, and allowed me to remain in ignorance of it. I ascertained, however, on the very day of his departure, that an emissary, whose name was not mentioned, had been sent to the Count d'Artois.* It was no easy matter to find out and arrest him on so short a notice. I have been assured that the report made by M. de Vitrolle to the allies had its due share in influencing the resolution taken by the Emperor Alexander of hurling the Emperor Napoleon from the throne.

M. de Vitrolle was one of the post-office agents, and had obtained the appointment owing to the regard felt by M. de Lavalette for some of his friends. Ever since the invasion of France, it had become almost impossible to communicate with Italy, where the army of the Viceroy was still stationed. Relying upon the gratitude of M. de Vitrolle, it had occurred to M. de Lavalette to intrust him with the mission of organising a regular communication with Italy through Switzerland and the rear of the hostile armies.

Vitrolle, who had been an eye-witness of the state of anxiety

* The person who informed me of M. de Vitrolle's departure had not divulged his name, but merely related the fact. He had, however, seen M. de Vitrolle, and was acquainted with every part of his mission; but although professing great friendship for me, and openly acknowledging the services I had rendered him, he would say no more, because he found that the political fabric was crumbling, and he was anxious to escape from the ruins; retaining, at the same time, the means of returning to complete his denunciation, if matters had taken a more favourable turn.

This false friend has been one of the most violent in compassing my ruin, after the events of the 22nd of June, 1815; notwithstanding that I had assisted him in 1812 with my money and with the weight of my protection.

prevailing in Paris, accepted the double mission given to him by Lavalette, and by his friend the Duke d'Alberg. He accordingly engaged to proceed in the first instance to the enemy's head-quarters, where he was properly recommended, and to obtain positive information respecting the views of the allied sovereigns; afterwards, as circumstances might dictate, he was either to execute M. de Lavalette's orders, or to repair to the residence of the Count d'Artois, then at Vesoul. He was at all events to follow that road. On his return from his mission he fell into the hands of French troops, when, as his good fortune would have it, he extricated himself by resorting to some stratagem; but he proved of no service to his employers, not having returned to Paris until the die of future events had been cast. He was on the point of paying dearly for the mission he had undertaken, having been arrested under the disguise of a servant, which had been provided for him by the Prince of Wirtemburg, who commanded the Russian advanced-guard where he had made his appearance with a request to be conducted to the Emperor Alexander. Prince Paul sent him on under the care of an officer, for whose servant he passed, when they were taken prisoners by General Piré the commander of our advanced-posts. He was not acquainted with the person of Vitrolle, and sent them to the grand head-quarters, where they were not at first recognised, no suspicion being entertained of such a conspiracy. The prisoners had just been dismissed, when M. de Saint-Didier, an officer of the Emperor's household who knew Vitrolle, arrived at head-quarters. Had M. de Vitrolle been detained an hour longer, he would have been a lost man.

The English newspapers of the beginning of March had given an account of the mission of a nobleman of the province of Dauphiny, who had been sent to the Count d'Artois. They had extracted details from the correspondence of the Russian head-quarters, where the circumstance was extolled as the

sure presage of success in any future operation; but they had distorted the name of Vitrolle, and written it Vitrieux or Vitreux. I made a fruitless search for such a name in all the statistical accounts of Dauphiny. I could have no doubt of this person being the emissary whose departure had been reported to me; but I never suspected M. de Vitrolle, whom I knew to be employed in the post-office department, and to be on terms of intimacy with M. de Lavalette and M. Pasquier, whom he was in the habit of meeting at the house of Madame de Vaudemont.

The arrest of such a man could not at any rate have been attended with important consequences. His mission could have been productive of no advantage, and had as yet no other character than that of an obscure intrigue. I have always been of opinion that M. de Talleyrand was aware of it, but he had certainly not seen him before his departure. I will presently explain myself.

In the midst of this apparent state of political dissolution, the reality of which was but too obvious, General Reynier returned to Paris. The reader will recollect that he had been taken prisoner at Leipsic, and recently exchanged. He had passed through the head-quarters of the allied sovereigns, to whom he had the honour of being presented previously to his being sent to the head-quarters of our own army.

The Emperor of Austria in admitting him to his presence, recommended that he should advise the Emperor to profit by the lessons which he had himself received from him, and to follow his own example by treating for peace on any terms; as otherwise it would be out of his, the Emperor of Austria's, power to do any thing more in favour of his daughter and of his grandson.

The Emperor Alexander gave a most friendly reception to General Reynier. The latter asked, in the course of conversation whether his Majesty would not confide some message to him for the Emperor Napoleon, whom he was

about to join, and who would know that he had been honoured with an interview. The Emperor Alexander replied in the negative, that he had personal grounds for complaint, and felt no inclination to come to any amicable terms with him.

The conversation was prolonged; and upon the remark made by General Reynier, that the Emperor was the chief of the state, the Emperor Alexander replied: "But that chief has been raised by yourselves (meaning the army) to his present dignity; and if you are called upon to adopt another, what objection could you have to a course which would enable you to be at peace with all the world?" General Reynier replied, that independently of the circumstance that no one could be found as a proper substitute for the Emperor, the allied sovereigns would be justified in entertaining a very poor opinion of a people who could be capable of so readily deserting a prince whose elevation they had so solemnly proclaimed. The Emperor of Russia stated in answer, that the nation would have no reproach to make to itself for yielding to the force of circumstances; that with respect to a choice, it seemed already pointed out by the suffrage which the Emperor Napoleon had given to the military man, whom he no doubt considered as the most calculated for a throne; and he mentioned Bernadotte by name. General Reynier replied, in a becoming manner, without indulging in any reflection at all disparaging to Marshal Bernadotte. He asked permission to take leave, and returned to Paris, where he related to me the above conversation. There is, unquestionably, sufficient evidence, according to the report made by General Reynier, that the object of the Emperor of Russia was to hurl the Emperor Napoleon from his throne. The pacific language ascribed to the allies at Châtillon was nothing more than a feint; and there is injustice in the assertion that it was in the power of the Emperor to have obtained terms of peace at the conferences held there. I reported this conversation to the Emperor on the same day, and he did me the honour to reply, that

he wished to speak with General Reynier. The general started off as fast as his horse could carry him, that he might be the sooner with the Emperor;* but when he had reached the second stage of his journey, he was attacked with so violent a fever, that it was found necessary to convey him back to Paris, in a state of high perspiration, followed by a general chilness all over the body, and subsequently by an inflammatory complaint, which in a few days terminated his existence: the Emperor had not, therefore, an opportunity of seeing him.

The hostile armies had approached to within so short a distance of Paris, that it was impossible to prevent the constant ingress and egress which must necessarily take place under favour of the confusion attendant upon the proximity of an army: independently of which, the communications between London and Châtillon passed through Paris, in conformity with an arrangement previously agreed upon. The superiority

* Another person, named Thurot, repaired to the Russian head-quarters, where he pretended to have been sent by the party opposed to the Emperor. He was well received; and as a treacherous spirit was found combined in the highest degree with the most shameless profligacy in this man's character, he obtained a hearing. This Thurot had been chief secretary to the ministry of police under the Directory, until the event of the 18th Brumaire. M. Fouché shortly afterwards dismissed him, since which time his whole life had been spent in low intrigues. In 1809 he was condemned to the galleys for matters connected with the administration of the grand army. This judgment having been annulled, he soon returned to Paris, where he attached himself to the fortunes of M. Anglès. From that moment he took upon himself to address reports to the Emperor's closet, respecting a variety of people and subjects, without being authorised to do so. The Emperor was highly disgusted at such impudence, and desired me to make a report to him respecting this individual. I could devise no way more effectual for this object than to order his arrest, and to carry off his papers. These were of a nature to be laid before a privy-council, which condemned him to confinement in a state-prison, as an immoral and dangerous man. On his way, under an escort, to the prison assigned to him, he effected his escape, and presented himself at the enemy's head-quarters, as having been deputed by the party opposed to the Emperor. In 1815 this Thurot remained in Paris, and attached himself to one of the chiefs of the public administration, whilst M. Anglès was at Ghent. I am at a loss to state which side he served or betrayed. This man is a specimen of those who have exercised some influence over our destinies.

of the allies, therefore, and the designs which they meditated, could hardly be kept a secret from the inhabitants: malevolence was accordingly stimulated to fresh exertions, and a general alarm was spread in the provinces. I had not waited until the evil was beyond a remedy to render to the Emperor an account of what I beheld, of what was reported to me, and of what I anticipated unless he made peace upon any terms that might be dictated to him.

The armistice had not yet expired. It was natural for me to apprehend that my report might fall into the enemy's hands, and make them acquainted with the existing state of things, which it was of the utmost importance to conceal from their view. I therefore abstained from committing my opinions to paper, in a case of so much delicacy; but availed myself of the return to the army of an officer of first-rate merit, who was well known to the Emperor; and I repeated to him, over and over again, what I was anxious he should tell that prince in my name. He faithfully discharged his mission: of this I possess an undeniable proof.

Seeing, however, that this course was not productive of the desired effect, I determined to write to the Emperor, and make him acquainted with the state of uneasiness to which I was a prey, and which I deemed but too well founded; and I requested, that as the last proof of attachment I might ever have it in my power to afford him, I might be allowed to remain in Paris, in the capacity of his commissioner, during the approaching occupation of the capital by the allied troops.

I pressed upon his consideration that it was useless to deceive himself respecting the consequences of so fatal an event; but that a man who should devote himself for his cause might encourage by his example all those who, having it in their power to shelter their responsibility under the cloak of his authority, would at least evince a perfect indifference to what might be demanded of them; and that the first spark of a courageous opposition in such an emergency would keep

many people in the path of honour, and induce them to listen to the voice of duty. I showed my letter to the arch-chancellor, as well as to M. Pasquier, who had called upon me at the moment of my closing it. We had conversed together on the subject of my fears; and he was as well persuaded as myself of the reality of the approaching danger. The Emperor did me the honour to reply in the most flattering language to the proposal I had submitted to him, but he did not coincide in opinion with me as to what I fancied I might have it in my power to do for his service. He even said that, for my own sake, he required I should leave Paris; adding, that I should be exposed to the most serious personal misfortunes if I placed myself in the power of the enemy. I was therefore under the necessity of abandoning my plan, because, had I failed of success, I could have urged no excuse after evading an order so pointedly given to me. The idea of self-preservation appeared the only prevalent one. The Emperor was pitied, but his fortunes were gradually deserted by all. Some of the commissioners who had been sent to rouse the public spirit in the departments had almost ceased to keep up a correspondence, and merely communicated that their efforts would be unavailing. Public energy was no where to be found. The political agony was complete. Some of those commissioners even endeavoured to secure to themselves a new position, by claiming it as a title to praise on their part that they had evaded the orders received from the Emperor's ministers.

CHAPTER XXX.

The Marquis de Rivière—How he happened to be thought of—Communications of Prince Joseph with Bernadotte—Extravagant notions entertained by the Emperor's brothers—Intrigue which prevents the timely arrival of the army of Spain—M. de la Besnardière—M. de Talleyrand, his insinuations and underhand dealings.

DURING this painful crisis, I received orders to arrest the Marquis de Rivière, in consequence, no doubt, of some reports sent from the province of Berry, where M. de Sémonville had been dispatched as the Emperor's commissioner. I have always been under the impression that he had suggested this measure by a direct application to the Emperor's closet; for there was little leisure or inclination in the camp to attend to M. de Rivière's proceedings. Malevolence had long been on the watch for opportunities of persuading the Emperor that the superintendence exercised by the minister of police was ineffectual, in order that whenever a favourable moment, which was eagerly sought for, should occur, a mass of petty anecdotes might be brought forward by way of inducing him to change his minister. Nevertheless, I had heard of all the proceedings of M. de Rivière in the province of Berry, and had written to M. de Sémonville, as well as to M. Didelot, who was prefect of the department. It was not, I believe, until the first-named person saw that I had my eyes open to what was going forward that he determined to write, with the view of screening himself from reproach: but when he received the order for M. de Rivière's arrest, which was the consequence of his report, our affairs had grown desperate, and he did not carry it into effect. I only relate this anecdote, as illustrating what I have just asserted; an assertion farther borne out by the following observation in M. de Rivière's own hand-writ-

ing, " that M. de Semonville would have executed the orders I had given, had he not made it evident to him that he was serving the cause of God and of justice."

I must also acknowledge that I took little notice of M. de Rivière, trusting that he would keep the word of honour he had given me when he pledged himself to avoid acting any part calculated to disturb the public peace. I was the more justified in relying upon his assurances, as at the time when misfortunes weighed most heavily upon him, he addressed to me the following words :—" Sir, I hold myself so much indebted to the Emperor, that if the Count d'Artois were to make his appearance to-morrow in the plain of Grenelle, at the head of a hundred thousand men, I should abstain from joining him."

To this reply of M. de Rivière, which I repeated to the Emperor, he was indebted for the gradual mitigations of severity which he experienced in his unhappy situation; for the Emperor was always disposed to trust to the honour of those who had given proofs of high feelings : he therefore relied upon the honour of a man who, after having served the cause of his own prince with so much attachment, could spontaneously assert that he renounced it of his own accord. Any ill-treatment shown to him from that moment would have been an act of cruelty.

M. de Rivière, however, did not wait until the Count d'Artois had a hundred thousand men under his orders, or until he had reached the plain of Grenelle, since he acknowledged that he would infallibly have been arrested, had he not proved to M. de Sémonville that he was serving the cause of God and of justice.

In the first days of the month of March Prince Joseph had, with the Emperor's permission, sent an agent to the Crown Prince of Sweden, who had recently joined his army in the neighbourhood of Maubeuge or Liège. The object of this mission was to learn from the Crown Prince by what

means the allies could be prevailed upon to grant a peace on reasonable conditions. That agent had returned with an answer which was but too strong a confirmation of the evil presentiments already entertained. Bernadotte announced that the discussion now rested upon the question of depriving the Emperor of his power. He recommended that a negotiation should be entered into upon that preliminary basis, as, if the enemy should once enter Paris, nothing more would remain to be done, because the Bourbons would then be restored to the throne.*

This message remained a secret. It was, however, sent to the Emperor, who had no longer any doubt respecting the views of the allied sovereigns. He plainly saw, that whilst they accused him of an unwillingness to make peace, conditions were offered for his acceptance which would be the sources of a future war, or rather which would have the effect of allowing breathing-time to the enemy, and enabling them to complete in the following campaign what they had not the power to effect in the present one.

Nevertheless the Emperor did not come to a determination

* Strange rumours were in circulation at this period respecting Prince Joseph. He is asserted to have said within the hearing of others, that it was no longer in the Emperor's power to make peace; but that he himself would bring it about by means of the Empress. My only reason for crediting the assertion was, that the Emperor's brothers had on other occasions ventured to suppose that they could act a conspicuous part without his assistance. What surprised me most in the present case was, that Prince Joseph should give way to such illusions. He was less presumptuous than the rest of the family, and was, besides, sincerely attached to his brother. Nevertheless the spirit of intrigue was actively at work about his person. He spoke to me himself of a plan which had been suggested to him. This was nothing less than to have him proclaimed as regent by the assembled senate, who would also have pronounced the Emperor's forfeiture of the throne. Joseph clearly saw that, if this event had occurred, he would have been at the enemy's mercy, after thus opening the road to Paris, which the fascination still attached to the Emperor's name had the effect of keeping still closed against them. I felt, however, the conviction that the leaders in the scheme had fed him with hopes of success previously to his quitting the metropolis.

without taking advice; for I recollect his sending to his brother Joseph the conditions which it was intended to impose upon him. He desired him to assemble a council (I do not recollect whether it was a council of the regency or a council of ministers), to lay those conditions before it, collect the votes, and transmit them to him. Illness prevented my attending the council; but M. Molé, who called upon me after it had broke up, gave me a summary of the subject under discussion. I cannot, therefore, give a more detailed account of it. The enemy required the yielding up of all the conquests purchased by France at the price of so much blood, and demanded, moreover, as guarantees for the fulfilment of this condition, the cession of Besançon, and of some other fortified towns along the first line of our frontiers, which would thereby have been left wholly unprotected. This could not be termed a peace. Such was the unanimous opinion of the council.

The Emperor did not disguise from himself that these proposals were nothing else but a snare laid for him. He was convinced that the allied sovereigns had already decided upon the course they should adopt, and that all the terms proposed to him were mere subterfuges resorted to for the purpose of degrading him in the eyes of the nation. He preferred perishing with arms in his hands rather than submit to such ignominious terms, which eventually the enemy might not have the power to enforce. The object of his being offered terms wholly inadmissible, and yet calculated to confirm the opinion industriously circulated that he was unwilling to make peace, was probably to be ascribed to the conviction entertained of his character, which could never brook an insult. It was plainly perceived that the enemy had no expectation that a plan which they were so slow in promoting could ever be brought to a conclusion. Nevertheless they had not yet ventured to speak openly of their views respecting a change of dynasty.

Had the Emperor found at this period as much zeal in his service as he had a right to expect, he ought to have been joined by the different corps composing the army of Spain; or they ought at least to have been already on the Upper Loire If he had had this force at his command, he would have crushed the Russians and Prussians, as well as the other confederated powers, his former friends. The Austrians would then have entered into a separate treaty, as it was known beyond a doubt that the Emperor of Austria was opposed to the advance upon Paris, an objection probably ascribable to the interest he took in his daughter's fate. Misfortune would have it, that in consequence of an offensive movement of our army upon the Upper Seine, he left the head-quarters of the allies, retired into Burgundy, and never made his appearance again at the camp; so that the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia remained the arbiters of the future destiny of France, and brought the ministers and generals of the Emperor of Austria to fall in with their views. There were just grounds for believing that the absence of the Emperor of Austria was premeditated, since the documents emanating from his cabinet plainly indicated a remnant of affection for the Empress. He had never ceased to protest "that he would not separate the cause of his daughter and of his grandson from that of France." He had confided to the sovereign who wielded the sceptre of that country "the child of his dearest affection. He tenderly loved his daughter; he deeply deplored her being exposed to fresh uneasiness; it was painful for him to find that Napoleon should refuse to acknowledge the friendly intentions of his cabinet." These expressions of kind interest, this feeling of tender pity, had no doubt alarmed those who had decreed the downfall of Napoleon. They were unwilling to expose themselves to the consequences of a change of sentiments on the part of a father who had shown a disposition to sacrifice his own daughter. They deemed it more prudent to remove him from the scene of action.

I have asserted that the Emperor might have obtained the assistance of the army of Spain: it remains to be told how he came to be deprived of it.

It has already been stated that the Duke of Bassano had opened negotiations with Valencey. Secrecy alone could insure their success; and every means had been adopted to prevent the proceedings from being made public. Nevertheless, they had not been brought to a close before every thing had transpired. The party who were conspiring against the Emperor took the alarm; and such was the power of their influence, that they succeeded in representing this measure of safety as the death-blow of our political institutions. The minister whose duty it was to watch their movements caught the infectious spirit, and was so blinded by his fears, as to throw himself at the Emperor's feet, and urge him to abandon a project which he said would completely destroy the fascination still working in our favour. He was harshly rebuked by the Emperor; but as this minister's movements afforded a key to the policy of the state, the English had been put upon their guard; and it was no longer easy to give effect to a measure which did not at first present any obstacle to its accomplishment. The tide of events was hurrying on; and it was no longer doubted that every thing had been prepared beyond the Pyrenees to obstruct the success of an object which must have been fatal to the plans of the allied sovereigns. Sufficient importance was not attached to an act, the conclusion of which should have been accelerated with a view to the Emperor's interest.

The period of the expiration of the armistice was fast approaching, and yet the contemplated treaty was not followed up. I addressed a letter to the Emperor on the subject, stating that when the negotiations of Valencey were first set on foot, every one had expected that they would at least be productive of the advantage of enabling him to call the army of Spain to his assistance. But this hope had been wholly relinquished, since no part of the transaction, not

even the departure of the princes, had been carried into effect.

I cannot take upon myself to say whether my letter answered the purpose intended; but the Emperor issued orders, courier after courier, for Ferdinand's departure, a proof that this formed a principal feature in the object he had in view; and that, if the case had been properly pressed upon his attention, it would have been brought so effectually to a close, as to enable him to dispose of his army on the frontiers of Spain in a manner more profitable to his service.

The Spanish princes quitted Valencey on the 19th of March, on their return to Spain, through the town of Perpignan; and on the 22nd of the same month the armistice was declared at an end. Hitherto the spirit of intrigue had been dormant in Paris; or at least it had acted with great circumspection: it had, nevertheless, found means of opening a communication with the allies, and had perhaps succeeded in urging them to break off the negotiations at Châtillon, and march upon Paris. The more I sought to penetrate through its obscurity, the greater became my conviction that it only waited for an assurance of support to develop its projects, which could never be otherwise than dependent upon the will of the allied sovereigns. So long as there was a probability that the latter would enter into a treaty, it did not break out into any open declaration. At last the expected moment arrived. All the persons employed in the ministry of foreign affairs who had been called to Châtillon, as well as to the Emperor's head-quarters, during the time of the conferences, were now returning to Paris.

Amongst the number was M. de La Bernardière, who had been entrusted with the management of the negotiation. He had been too long and too deeply practised in state affairs to be mistaken as to the real views of the allies. It was through him that M. de Talleyrand obtained a knowledge of every thing that had been done at Châtillon. I ascertained at a

later period that this diplomatist had held communications of a direct nature with a more elevated personage; but what he had learned from M. de La Bernardière, the rupture of the armistice, as well as of the conferences, proved that the assurances made to him were not empty words. From that moment he became more confident, and only dreamed of accelerating a revolution, of which he had long prepared the elements, though he had not made up his mind as to the particular direction he should give to it, however fully determined that it should accomplish the overthrow of the empire.

Every thing was perfectly quiet in the provinces. Paris was the seat of action; and the signal to be given by the allies was anxiously awaited. If their cause was honestly supported, it may reasonably be asked why they did not sooner reach the capital.

As for ourselves, we had already experienced the fatal effects of the measure we had adopted with respect to the local administrations, which were ordered to withdraw at the enemy's approach. We were almost in absolute ignorance of what had taken place in the invaded territory. The difficulty was such, that when it became necessary to transmit to the blockaded towns the orders addressed to them on the 19th of March by the minister of war, they could only be sent by deserters. These orders were however of little consequence; for supposing the Duke of Feltre had taken upon himself to point out a general rendezvous to the troops which were defending our fortresses, there was no time for them to reach it.* It was at the moment of the passage of the Rhine by the hostile armies that the garrisons should have been called upon to assemble, and brought into line, since the allies did not stop before our fortified towns.

* The orders of the minister of war, which did not leave Paris until the 20th of March, had not yet crossed the frontier when the fate of Paris was already decided.

I began to watch more narrowly M. de Talleyrand, who spoke a language adapted to the sentiments of every one, and who was besides the only centre of attraction for men disposed to create a convulsion. His position was already laid down by a series of intrigues, respecting which he could not hope to practise any deception. There certainly did not exist any proofs sufficiently strong to justify measures of severity against a man of his rank in the state. But disclosures would have been brought about by a peace; and M. de Talleyrand was too shrewd not to know that the only danger for him was in stopping half way. I therefore considered him as the man who was about to become the leader of a party against the Emperor; though certainly not against the dynasty springing out of a revolution, in which he had acted so conspicuous a part.

If he had found it necessary to make a stir, he had no occasion to wrap himself up in mystery, since the course of events was so evidently favouring his views. He was well aware of the resolution of the allied sovereigns, and was attentively watching to find out on which side the edifice would give way. He sometimes called upon me, waited until my return if I happened to be out, and freely indulged in conversations in which he deplored the existing state of France. He compared it with her condition at the time of the peace of Tilsit, exclaiming, "That all this should have happened within the period of six years!" He then launched out against the Duke of Bassano, spoke of adulation and flattery, and coming at last to the point, he said to me: "What are we to do in such afflicting circumstances? It is not to be expected that every one should remain in a house on fire: be on your guard; something will happen to you like the scene of the 23rd of October. You are aware there is in Burgundy a Marquis de La Salle, who is very active, and is raising partisans. This example will be contagious for other provinces."

M. de Talleyrand was quite right in what concerned the Marquis de La Salle. I was informed of his attempts, and of their failure. Had it not been for the arrival of the enemy in Paris, and the consequences of that event, such means as those employed by the Marquis de La Salle would not have occasioned the defection of a single man of any consequence. M. de Talleyrand did not desire it. He had a very different object in view from that in the execution of which he was compelled to concur, by a variety of circumstances, of which I shall afford some explanation to the reader.

I strongly suspected that he derived his information respecting the proceedings of the Marquis from his friendly intercourse with a person who was on most intimate terms with M. de La Salle; and as, in a period of revolution, when one has no farther occasion to think of self, one's friends are the next objects of attention, he would not allow me to be shipwrecked, and was stretching out his hand to save me. I had a positive order to abstain from measures of severity, and was therefore under the necessity of allowing him to run on. I affected not to understand, though in fact my curiosity was the more excited. His experience, however, was proof against the bait thus held out. I could obtain no positive information from him.

I was correctly informed of all the visits he received; but his conduct was so artfully disguised, that he could give it the appearance of being quite natural, by successively receiving persons of every opinion, and of all characters. I took care not to have one of them spoken to: the state of our affairs was far too desperate to induce any of those persons to renounce the court favours which they already anticipated the prospect of obtaining. What, besides, could they have told me? of a conversation in which no positive fact could be discovered, or of their private opinions respecting the intentions of M. de Talleyrand, which were in a great measure known to me.

I was in this state of uneasiness, when happening to ride about town it occurred to me to pass close by the prince's hotel. I descried from a great distance the carriage of the Archbishop of Mechlin, and imagined they were in close conference together. Being determined to satisfy myself on the subject, I dismounted in the street, and walked in unexpectedly, instead of having the folding-door of the hotel thrown open to me. The porter recognised but had not the courage to stop me. I quickly ascended the staircase, and reached M. de Talleyrand's closet without meeting with any one in the ante-chamber. He was in close conference with the archbishop. I entered so suddenly, that my appearance had as striking an effect upon them as if I had got in through the window.

They stopped short in their conversation, which had been exceedingly animated; both seemed to have suddenly lost the power of speech. The archbishop's countenance, however, appeared the most discomposed. On perceiving their confusion, I guessed the subject of their conversation, and could not help saying to them, "This time, at least, you cannot deny it, I find you in the act of conspiring." I was right in my conjecture: they set up a laugh, and endeavoured to deceive me as to their intentions; but I requested them in vain to continue their conversation: they had lost the thread of it. I withdrew, under the conviction that they were hatching some plot, though I was ignorant of its exact nature.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Rupture of the conferences of Lusigny—Proclamation of Louis XVIII.—The intrigues of the period do not bear the stamp of royalism—M. Fouché; measure which he suggests for bringing matters to a conclusion—Operations of the Emperor—He throws himself into the rear of the allies—His letter to the Empress is intercepted—Bitter affliction of that princess.

It will be recollected that the conferences were not broken off until the 20th of March. The news of this occurrence was received in Paris on the 22nd or 23d, previously to the adoption of any unanimous course of proceeding towards the allies. A delay of a few days was wanting; but this was deemed to be of no avail, as it was easy to calculate the number of days which the enemy would require to reach the gates of the capital. Nevertheless, I was informed of the sudden arrival in Paris of M. Adrien de Montmorency, upon whom I was keeping a strict watch; and who, since late events, was living with M. de Chevreuse, at his residence of Dampierre in the vicinity of Rambouillet. I sent for him, but he avoided the meeting. It was reported to me that he had seen M. de Talleyrand; after which, it was farther asserted that he had returned to Dampierre. This was not the fact: he had made a long circuit to repair to the residence of the Count d'Artois. It was too late for this mission to be productive of any result: the person who was charged with it was, besides, of too prudent a character to incur fresh risks, or to venture himself without having a fair chance of success. His return was alone calculated to give rise to some serious inquiries; but the course of events brought the enemy to Paris before he re-entered it. I therefore retained my first opinion, that every thing was dependent upon events; and that the volcano would only explode after the decision of the allied

sovereigns should be made known. The work of intrigues continued. Some took a part in them with the intention of making a disclosure to the police, if they failed of success; others, to make them the grounds for courting favours, if they should prove successful. The object of all was to worship at the shrine of the new chief who might be presented to them.*

This deplorable state of things was to be ascribed to the low ebb of our affairs; of which it was beyond the reach of common understandings to form a correct notion. In a crisis like the present I was rejoiced that M. Fouché was not in Paris; because he would not have failed coming to terms with the strongest party, and betraying all the rest, in order to secure his individual prospects. In consequence of the events which had occurred in Italy, he had returned with Princess Eliza to the southern departments, to the senatorship of

* The projects of the intriguers were so circumscribed within their own circle, that they took the greatest precautions to elude the search of the police. It was not until the end of February, or during the month of March, that they had the courage to circulate the King's proclamation to the French. It was dated in London, and at the period when the princes of the house of Bourbon were leaving that capital on their way to the continent, nearly a twelvemonth before. If they had kept up a committee, or a secret understanding with the agitators of the day, the latter might have received that document nearly as soon as it made its appearance in England. The truth, however, is, that the Emperor was the first to receive it during his last residence at Trianon.

I had become so completely master of all the means of communication with England and with foreign countries, until the moment of the invasion of France, that it was only, as I afterwards ascertained, through one of my agents that the Archbishop of Mechlin obtained the English newspapers in which the proclamation was inserted. From that moment, also, small printed copies of that document got into circulation in Paris. They were scattered at night about the streets, and slipped under the doors of private houses, in order to prevent the agents of police from picking them up. These copies had been printed with so much mystery, that a private printing-press had been used for the purpose. The type was so confusedly arranged, that the words ran in an uneven line: a proof of the great circumspection of those who distributed this document. Not a single manuscript paper was ventured into circulation. Had this scheme met with any support, it would have been much more boldly followed up; but the copies were sent back to the police from almost all the houses which had received them.

Arles, if I recollect rightly; and he there waited for the issue of the events which obscured the political horizon.*

The rupture of the conferences, by spreading alarm in the public mind, had the effect of again bringing to Paris a superabundance of population, consisting of those people from the country who had given way to fear. Every one related the tales which his alarm had magnified into realities; and many fools were found to credit them. There would have been madness in attempting to prevent this idle talk, which I allowed to go on, the rather so as I had not the means of preventing it. Had the disaffected undertaken any thing, I had not the power to oppose them; and the slightest display of severity would have been the signal for a general rising.

Paris had become the only point which afforded any shelter. Every where else, the apprehension was felt of coming into contact with foreign enemies, or of witnessing disturbances which seemed to be the necessary consequence of their approach.

The first operations that followed the resumption of hostilities began by a movement in the direction of the river Oise.

The enemy had reinforced themselves in that quarter by the arrival of different corps of troops, which had already successively crossed the Rhine from Holland as far as the neighbourhood of Coblentz.

The Emperor made an offensive movement upon Soissons, vigorously pressed the allies, defeated them before Craon, and pursued them to the walls of Laon, where he fought a disastrous battle. After a march and engagements which had lasted the whole day, our troops were recruiting from their fatigues, when the enemy's cavalry rushed in upon them under the favour of night. They were unable to resist the

* I have it from an eye-witness, who was with Princess Eliza previously to the occupation of Paris, that M. Fouché had the boldness to say to the Emperor's own sister, "Madam, we have but one means of escape left; this is, by instantly dispatching the Emperor."

shock, and disorder spread through the ranks. The corps of Marshal Marmont and of the Duke of Padua respectively suffered very severe losses. The battle was, however, risked, and proved so unsuccessful, that we were compelled to retreat. The Emperor marched next upon Rheims, which he entered, after having driven back the Russians. The enemy's grand army had in the mean while resumed its march down the Seine, in order to force us back upon Paris.

The Emperor had been joined in the first-named town by some troops, which he had drawn from the garrisons of Mezieres and the adjoining towns. He drew nearer to the river Marne, so as to be able to move towards the Aisne on his left, and the Seine on his right. As I did not accompany the army, I never had more than an imperfect knowledge of the series of movements by which the Emperor had, ever since the month of January, kept in check an army upwards of five times as numerous as his own. A calculation was made of the number of days he would still be able to resist. Compassion was felt for a hero, who wanted nothing more than numerical strength to astonish the world by fresh prodigies of valour.

On quitting the borders of the Aisne, in order to move towards the Marne, he left the two corps of Marshals Marmont and Mortier upon that river, and proceeded through Meaux, for the purpose of forming a junction with that part of his army which was retreating by the right bank and descending the river Seine, in consequence of the movement of the enemy's grand army commanded by the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia in person. The Emperor of Austria had remained in Burgundy, where it was no doubt suggested to him that he should fix his residence, in order to free him from the odium of the measures they were about to undertake.

The danger was so imminent, that the Emperor was urged on all sides to anticipate the moment of the enemy's entering Paris, and to forestall them. Every one asked him for in-

structions: he replied to all in such a manner as to inspire them with a confidence which he was far from entertaining. His pretended calmness and security had no longer the effect of dispelling the general alarm, which fresh occurrences daily contributed to excite.

It appears, however, that he had felt a conviction of the truth of all that had been represented to him; and that he had given to Prince Joseph certain positive orders in the event of the occurrence which he had himself anticipated, as will hereafter be seen.

Marshals Mortier and Marmont, who had retired in the direction of Meaux, had just been attacked by superior forces, and compelled to retreat before them. Notwithstanding the unfavourable aspect of our affairs, the Emperor formed a plan of operations which might have repaired all our misfortunes. It would, indeed, have had the effect of disconcerting all his enemies; and would probably have been attended with a successful result, had it not been for the accidental circumstance I am about to relate.

The Emperor, finding that his numerical strength was unequal to contend with the enemy, conceived the idea of concentrating his army, and of forcing his way through the enemy in such a manner as to reach the heart of his fortified towns, of which he contemplated to collect the respective garrisons. As soon as he should reach Verdun, he could open a communication with them, and with the places which filled up the intermediate space between that town and the fortresses of Metz and Strasburg, which were only blockaded by inconsiderable forces.

He was proceeding to carry into effect the above plan, which he had communicated to his brother Joseph, and he had given orders at the same time to Marshals Mortier and Marmont to follow him through the province of Champagne. They were to overtake him beyond Vitry, by following the left bank of the Marne. When the Emperor had decided upon that

movement, he had given directions in Paris for the detention of all the troops which might have been sent to join him, and he had particularly desired that preparations should be made for a defence of a few days, because, as he calculated that the whole hostile army would follow him in the movement which he meditated, he expected that he should be able to return in time to Paris. If it should happen otherwise, it would then be evident that Paris was the bone of contention, and that the Emperor would not remove to too great a distance, in order to have it in his power to relieve it. We shall now see what actually came to pass.

The Emperor never failed to keep up a correspondence with the Empress; and since the communications had become so difficult, he made use of a cipher for the purpose. He felt anxious, when commencing his movement, to quiet her apprehensions of the result that might attend it; and accordingly wrote to apprise her of his intention, and to request at the same time that she would not be alarmed at remaining a few days without intelligence from him. Unfortunately, this letter was not in ciphers, but in a common hand-writing; and, owing to a still greater fatality, the courier who was the bearer of it, supposing that the French troops were still in possession of Meaux, proceeded in the direction of that town, where he fell with his dispatches into the power of the allies.

On the same day Marshal Blucher sent a flag of truce to the advanced posts with a letter for the Empress, to whom he enclosed one from the Emperor, which had been broken open. He assured her how highly flattered he was that this circumstance had afforded him the opportunity of laying at her feet the homage of his profound respect, &c.; but still the Emperor's letter had been read. It dwelt upon the idea of his contemplated movement, and ended in these words: "This manœuvre must either save me or accomplish my ruin."

The Empress, who was possessed of great self-command,

was careful at first to disguise the painful sensations which the perusal of this letter had occasioned her. She did not mention the subject to those who were about her person when she received it. At night, however, when I waited upon her, in her saloon, she did me the honour to name me for her partner at cards. We had just sat down; but, contrary to her custom, she did not allow the envelope of the pack to be broken, a proof that she was not inclined to play. She waited a moment until the company in the drawing-room were all seated; and when the attention was no longer exclusively fixed upon her, she opened the conversation. She spoke at first about indifferent matters, and by degrees came to advert to the Emperor, whom she always mentioned with the most lively interest. She sought, by indulging in the company of those she knew to be attached to him, to recover from the presentiments which were daily crowding upon her. She asked me if I had received any letters from the Emperor; to which question I replied in the negative. "Well, then," she said, "I can supply you with some which I received this very morning." I could not help expressing my surprise, and remarking to her that no courier had arrived. "It is very true," she said, "that no courier has arrived: and I shall astonish you still more when I inform you that a letter from the Emperor has been sent to me by Marshal Blucher himself, who states that it was found amongst many others of which a courier was the bearer when taken prisoner. To speak candidly to you, I am exceedingly uneasy since I have reflected upon the consequences likely to arise from that accident. The Emperor has always written to me in ciphers. Ever since his departure all his letters thus ciphered have come safely to hand: the present letter, however, which is written in a common hand-writing, is the only one in which he speaks to me of his design, and it happens to fall into the enemy's hands! There is in this circumstance a fatality which deeply afflicts me."

The good sense of this Princess had made her penetrate at once the unpleasant consequences to which such an accident might lead; and she did not deceive herself, though she pretended to be persuaded of every thing that was said with the view of quieting her alarms. This accident will, I think, satisfactorily explain what Lord Castlereagh intimated in the British Parliament, when, on rendering to that assembly an account of the operations of the allied armies in France, he stated that great indecision prevailed as to the propriety of a march to Paris, until detailed communications of great importance were received at head-quarters, which occasioned the determination to advance towards the capital.

If that diplomatist did not allude to the letter written by the Emperor to the Empress, his expressions must have referred to communications brought by M. de Vitrolle, who went to acquaint the enemy with the actual state of Paris, and with the progress made by Messrs. de Talleyrand, Dalberg, and others, in the projects meditated against the Emperor. Paris and all France have contracted a debt of sincere gratitude to him.

An expectation was entertained for some time in Paris that the enemy would exclusively attend to the Emperor's movement, so slow were all their proceedings; but this impression soon vanished, when intelligence was brought that the enemy's grand army was marching through La Brie. All hope had not yet been abandoned, when the report was spread that the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia had slept at Coulommiers, about fourteen leagues from Paris, on the road which, after crossing through La Brie, comes to meet the river Marne at Lagny. There could no longer be any doubt of the fact, since some of the inhabitants of Coulommiers had left that town, on their way to Paris, after those two sovereigns had penetrated into their district.

Multitudes of country people were flying in all directions on the enemy's approach, and pouring into Paris, whose

numerous population was almost the only protection remaining to it. The danger was pressing: the minister of war, who was more especially concerned in this case, requested the Empress regent to convoke a council, in order that the situation of the state might be laid before it, and that he might save himself from blame. He procured the regent's authority to recall to Paris the corps of Marshals Mortier and Marmont, which were already on their march to overtake the Emperor. The order sent to them was received in time to be carried into effect; and these two corps arrived at Charenton on the very day when the enemy's grand army was driving before it in the rear of Claye, and on the road leading to Meaux, within six leagues of Paris, the whole corps which we had to protect us in that direction.

The council which the minister of war had called for, met the same night at the palace of the Tuileries. As this was the sitting in which a determination was taken which brought on the downfall of France, it is of importance that none of the details of its proceedings should be omitted.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Council of regency—Ought the Empress to quit Paris—M. Boulay de la Meurthe proposes that she should repair to the Town-hall—The council adopts this opinion—The Duke de Feltre—Joseph concurs in opinion with him—The departure is determined upon—The proposal of raising an insurrection in Paris is suggested to the author—Motives which prevent him from resorting to this course—The intrigues directed against him operate as a caution for his acting with circumspection—M. de Talleyrand again.

WARNED by the Emperor's letter of the danger which threatened them, the enemy assembled a council, in which the situation of affairs was warmly discussed. Some were for

marching upon Paris, others for retreating towards the Rhine. Each one urged those considerations which to him appeared of greatest weight. A feeling of hesitation was prevalent. Doubts were entertained as to what course should be adopted, when an emissary arrived with intelligence which removed this uncertainty. Alexander announced his determination of trusting every thing to fortune. The whole army was immediately put in motion, instead of falling back upon Chaumont, as the Emperor had calculated. Schwartzenberg had penetrated beyond the Aube; Blucher had crossed the Aisne. The allied armies had effected a junction, and were advancing in a body upon Paris; an attempt they never would have made, had the army of Spain been on its way to join the Emperor. If instead of our troops being scattered over different parts of the territory, they had been brought into a compact mass, an army might have been collected far more formidable than that of the allies, and composed of troops long accustomed to defeat them. In this respect the Emperor's service was ill attended to. An army should have been assembled to assist him, and he would then have given a good account of his foes.

The council which assembled at the Tuileries on the night already adverted to, was composed as follows:—

The Empress.
Prince Joseph.
The Prince of Benevento.
The Arch-chancellor.
The Arch-treasurer.
The High-Judge, M. Molé.
For the department of the interior, M. de Montalivet.
For the war department, the Duke de Feltre.
For the department of public worship, M. Bigot de Préameneu.
For the department of commerce, M. de Sussy.

The Duke de Cadore, as secretary of state.
For the finance department, the Duke of Gaeta.
For the department of the treasury, M. Mollien.
For the administration of war, M. Daru.
For the ministry of police, the Duke of Rovigo.
For the marine department, the Duke Decrès.

Ministers of state.

The Duke de Massa.
M. Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely.
M. Boulay de la Meurthe.
M. Merlin (of Douay).
M. Muraire.
The Count de Cessac.
M. de Fermont.
The president of the senate, M. de Lacepède.

I believe, though I cannot affirm it, that Marshals Moncey and Serrurier assisted at the council.

The council assembled at half-past eight o'clock. The Regent occupied the chair of state. Prince Joseph, after having asked her permission, informed the council of the motive of its being convoked, and then said to the Duke de Feltre, minister of war, that he was to open the discussion. The latter gave an exact representation of the dangers that threatened the capital, which were so urgent, as I have already stated, that he had deemed it his duty to make the Regent acquainted with the state of affairs, as he felt unwilling to take upon himself the responsibility of events. On establishing a comparison between the time which was necessary for the Emperor to make his appearance, and the proximity of the enemy to the capital, he saw no possibility of effectually resisting them. He enumerated what troops we had in Paris and in its neighbourhood, and represented that the corps of Marshals Mortier and Marmont had not yet

arrived. If he abstained from any observation calculated to increase the prevailing anxiety, he said nothing that could allay it. He laid particular stress on every ground of alarm, but was silent as to our resources, and had not a word of consolation for our ears. He overlooked altogether the corps of upwards of ten thousand men, which occupied the road from Versailles to Vendôme, where he had sent them beforehand, having no doubt settled in his own mind the question of the departure of the Empress. He omitted, amongst other things, to notice the condition of the arsenal of Paris, which contained fifty-four thousand muskets in complete repair. He was equally silent respecting a park of artillery of two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon of different calibres, ready mounted upon carriages, with their ammunition-caissons ready filled, and ranged with the guns in the Champ de Mars, independently of the artillery at the several barriers. But he carefully pointed out that the Emperor had not left in Paris a single disposable artillery horse, having successively ordered to the army all those that had been collected. In this respect the minister did not adhere to the truth. The artillery horses which the Emperor had ordered from Paris to the army had been collected by means of the prefect of the department of the Seine for the service of the artillery at the barriers, in case it had been found necessary to move it from one spot to another. But the minister of war, who never allowed any means to escape him by which he could affect the display of greater zeal than any one else, used every endeavour to persuade the Emperor that he alone was competent to serve him; and of his own authority he removed from the prefecture of the Seine the draft-horses which that branch of the service had succeeded in collecting.

On hearing the language of the minister of war, it was difficult to avoid entertaining the most gloomy presentiments. His statement was a mixture of loyalty, prudence, adulation, and independence of mind, which was perfectly unintelligible.

The real meaning of his words appeared to be: "I have warned you of every thing; I wash my hands of what may hereafter come to pass."

Such a statement was not calculated to inspire confidence in those who were strangers to military operations. Who could feel any degree of hope, when the Duke de Feltre was heard to despair of the efficiency of the resources remaining at his command? I am at a loss to account for the motives that induced him to darken a picture which was of itself sufficiently gloomy. He must have been actuated by certain considerations in adopting this course of conduct, since the natural consequence of his statement was to bring under discussion the necessity of the departure of the Empress and her son, whom he had just exhibited to view as surrounded with dangers.

Dismissing, in fact, the other subject, the discussion was now made to turn upon the question whether the Empress should remain in Paris, or remove from it. The debate now began. The members of the council spoke as worthy Frenchmen, and as men strongly attached to the Emperor, and to the fabric he had raised. They developed all the danger that would attend the abandoning the capital to a hostile influence, by removing from the citizens of Paris any interest they might feel in defending it; a circumstance which would come to pass as soon as they should find that they were not deemed worthy of being intrusted with the charge of protecting the Empress and the little King of Rome, whom the Emperor had made them swear to defend, and in whose name the national guard of Paris had been placed under arms.

It was observed that our remaining power was all centred in Paris; that its strength consisted in the presence of the sovereign in the midst of its population, which would display the most unbounded attachment, on finding that every confidence was reposed in its zeal.

The proposal was made of bringing the Empress to the

Town-hall, at the moment of danger, and showing her to the people in the streets, the suburbs, and the boulevards. This courageous opinion, which was offered by M. Boulay de la Meurthe, was supported by the whole council. M. de Talleyrand himself concurred in it; he stated the grounds of his opinion, and did not disguise the possibility of a commotion, which nothing but the presence of the Empress could allay. The Duke de Feltre spoke in his turn, and was of a contrary way of thinking; when he had concluded, the Duke de Massa presented certain considerations of an opposite tendency, and urged them with great energy. I spoke in my turn, and laid great stress upon the danger that might arise from the absence of the Empress. I rested my opinion upon the favourable sentiments I knew to be prevalent amongst that part of the population which is held in least estimation, and is, nevertheless, most disposed to endure every sacrifice. Silence pervaded the assembly for a few moments. The Arch-chancellor collected the votes; all, with the exception of the minister of war, were for the Empress remaining in Paris. The Duke de Feltre asked permission to speak; and began a long discourse, which must be still fresh in the recollection of all who heard it: it has had too great an influence over our destinies, not to render it necessary to notice its principal features. After a rather lengthy exordium, in which he quoted some facts derived from history, and some traits of devotedness drawn from the same source, he made an application of our existing condition to that in which other sovereigns had been placed, who were compelled by the casualties of war to abandon their capitals. He insisted that it was a mistake to consider Paris as the centre of the Emperor's power. This power attended the prince wherever he went. So long as a village was left standing, where he or his son should be acknowledged, there all Frenchmen ought to rally round his cause: that spot was their capital. The safety of the state ought not to be so hastily despaired of. For his own part, he

was at a loss to conceive how men who had so long professed an attachment to the Emperor's person, could suggest the idea of exposing his son to fall into the hands of the enemy. This was the only bond of union between France and Austria. We should (he continued) have no farther resource left to us, if we yielded to the treacherous suggestion of delivering up to the Greeks the offspring of our Hector.

The Duke de Feltre was much agitated. It was easy to perceive that he was seeking for those turns of phrase and expressions which could best express his attachment to the Emperor whilst he was in the presence of the Empress; before whom, however, he felt no hesitation in being of an opposite opinion to the rest of the council: nevertheless, his speech did not remain unanswered. A reply was given to the different pictures he had drawn; and notwithstanding the tone of assurance he had assumed, the council, whose votes were again taken on the subject, was of opinion that the Empress should remain in Paris. This question was carried by as many votes as the preceding one.

Prince Joseph was for a retreat. But there was no difficulty in discovering that he opposed the resolution not so much because he disapproved of it, as in order to acquire a certainty that every member of the council had spoken his candid opinion. Being compelled at last to vote in his turn, he sided with the minister of war; and exhibited a letter from the Emperor, who had informed him that, owing to the difficulty of keeping up the communications, he could not point out what it might be proper to do in case of any unexpected occurrence. He (Prince Joseph) ought therefore to be guided by circumstances; but there could not happen a greater misfortune than that the King of Rome should fall into the enemy's power. Should there be any grounds for apprehending such a danger, he desired him in the most unequivocal manner to send off the Empress and his son to Rambouillet, and from thence to Tours. The Emperor's letter farther

stated, I believe, that it would be treasonable to expose the King of Rome to the danger of falling into the enemy's hands. The communication of this letter was a severe blow to the members of the council, and explained the opinion expressed by the Duke de Feltre, who was no doubt acquainted with it; for he had long urged the Emperor to issue instructions in case of the event with which we were now threatened. It must be owned that the Emperor could not issue any order more suited to the views of those who are willing enough to reap the honours attached to their situation, provided they are not called upon to share in its dangers.

Notwithstanding the intentions so formally manifested in the Emperor's letter, the council adhered to its opinion. The Duke de Cadore even proposed that, dismissing its contents from their consideration, they should detain the Empress in Paris. It was unanimously agreed, that if the point under discussion were to be decided by the vote of the members of the council, neither the Empress nor the government should quit the capital; but that if it were intended to carry the Emperor's order into effect, it was useless to call them together, as it ought not to have been supposed that they intended to disobey the Emperor. It behoved those persons to whom he had delegated his power, to consider whether the moment had arrived which he had fixed upon for the removal of the government from Paris.

M. de Talleyrand again observed that all was lost, if Paris were abandoned. On a third scrutiny, however, it was decided that since there existed an order from the Emperor, it ought to be complied with, however likely to prove injurious to his cause. The Arch-chancellor, after having collected all the votes, also agreed in the propriety of the departure, and announced that Her Majesty and her son should set out at eight o'clock the next morning for Rambouillet.

As soon as this determination was adopted, each of the ministers demanded instructions for conducting his depart-

ment of the service; and it was agreed—1st, that Prince Joseph should remain in Paris, and the Arch-chancellor alone should accompany the Empress and the King of Rome;—2ndly, that the other dignitaries and the ministers were also to remain in Paris, until Prince Joseph should give his orders for their departure, which, to obviate any mistake, would be signified to each by M. Molé, the high judge;—3dly, it was agreed that the president of the senate should accompany the Empress; previously to which he was to caution all the members of that body against attending any summons to assemble which had not the stamp of legality, or, in other words, which might be deficient in the forms prescribed by the constitutions of the empire.

These points having been determined upon, the sitting broke up, at the hour of two in the morning.

The members composing the council met in the adjoining apartment, and deplored the resolution which had just been adopted. Many addressed me in these words—"If I were minister of police, Paris should be in a state of insurrection to-morrow, and the Empress should not be allowed to depart."

The inhabitants of Paris were no doubt well inclined to rise.* I had long discovered that nothing was easier than to set it in motion; a course which wholly depended upon myself. "Which of you," I said to them, "would take the responsibility of the events that might be the consequence of such a movement; especially after what you have just witnessed, and after your having decided that the Emperor's orders should be obeyed? You advise me to take upon myself what you have been apprehensive of attempting. How am I to know the Emperor's intentions, and whether such a movement might not interfere with them?—Should I fail of success, what purpose would have been answered by the massacre, the

* I had kept the Emperor regularly informed of the disposition of the inhabitants of Paris, whose only cry was for arms, which were refused to them.

plunder, and the many other evils consequent upon an appeal to the mass of the people? Is it certain, is it even probable that the sovereign who refused to protect his retreat by the burning of Leipsic, would desire to reign at the expense of the misfortunes in which a similar determination might involve the capital? What answer could I ever give to his reproaches? What could I urge against the complaints of a hundred thousand families, which would call me to an account for the loss of their chiefs, their dwellings, and their fortunes? How could I ever consent to make so many victims, or cause such bitter tears? I cannot take upon myself to plunge a whole population into an abyss of misery. Independently of this consideration, had I the resolution to act in such a manner, the spirit of my instructions forbids me. Far from requiring that I should compromise the safety of the inhabitants, the Emperor has desired me to quit Paris if the allies should enter it. I might certainly prevent the departure of the Empress; but none but a madman could presume to master the events which might follow such an act of violence. In endeavouring to serve the Emperor, I might destroy his remaining chance of success, and turn to the advantage of a party whatever hopes he may still indulge in. The case might be otherwise if I had no orders to obey, and if it came suddenly upon me; but every thing has been foreseen: I must only conform, like the rest. I deplore with them the fatal resolution just adopted; but I will not take upon my individual responsibility, what you have not dared to do in your collective capacity."

I had more than one motive for resisting the advice given to me: they were as follows. I had long since discovered that the Emperor, though fully persuaded of my attachment to his person, had not been wholly inaccessible to the insinuations thrown out in respect to me. It was represented that I did not attend to business; that I was led by the persons employed under my orders; that I was the sport of intrigues;

that with the best possible intentions I was not adequate to the situation of minister of police, and was a perfect stranger to the revolution, a deep knowledge of which was required for the proper discharge of the duties of that office.

The party who had been foiled by my appointment to the ministry had not lost the hope of procuring my removal, and substituting one of its own members, as it had done for the last fifteen years in respect to every other branch of the administration. I could not disguise from myself, on the occasion of the affair of the 23rd of October, that if I was not then sacrificed by the Emperor to the calumnious imputations of the minister of war, it was owing to the circumstance of his being so fully convinced of the baseness of the reports transmitted to him, as to be under the necessity of acknowledging that no blame attached to me in the business; but as he had at first given a kind of sanction to what had been related to him, he was unwilling to retrace his steps at once. The minister of war had made himself conspicuous in the intrigues of the revolution. Some associates and friends of that period had rallied round him; and they jointly exerted every possible means of procuring the appointment of a person to succeed me. I saw, and was told every thing; I had no doubt of the fact of these intrigues, and only proved myself the more faithful in the discharge of my duties. I had, however, renounced all farther reliance upon the effects of the Emperor's former kindness for me when I acted as his aide-de-camp. I was even fully satisfied that he would call me to a more strict account than any one else; not that he had entirely dismissed me from his regard, but because he had been made to believe that I was inclined to boast of possessing his esteem in a more especial degree, and often allowed myself a latitude of action, upon the conviction that I might do any thing with impunity.

Since his journey to Holland, during which the Queen of Naples came to Paris, and especially since his return from

Russia, I had opportunities of discovering that I had fallen off in his good opinion.

I accordingly became more reserved, and constantly felt the uneasiness of a man who is considered to be out of his place, and is compelled to seek consolation within himself for the injustice done to him. I regretted having left the military profession; and yet felt a degree of aversion for those perpetual wars which had grown into a habit, instead of presenting the same career of glory as in the early period of the Emperor's reign.

Such being my position, aware, as I have said, of all the intrigues directed against me, I had every thing to fear in opposing the minister of war. He would, in fact, have infallibly thrown upon me the whole responsibility of the attempt; and, in order to be consistent with himself, and place his responsibility under shelter, whilst he yielded at the same time to an impulse inherent in the human breast, he would not have failed to divulge to the troops the meditated scheme. The generals in command would have instantly deserted me, and I should then have appeared in no other light than as the leader of a factious band: for the head of a party, in a moment of danger, possesses no influence when abandoned by the soldiery. Is it likely that Marshals Marmont and Mortier, being previously put upon their guard by the minister of war, would have ventured to take part in an insurrection in which they could not have been the principal actors, when, on the other hand, they protected their responsibility by following the direction given by the minister of war?

What would then have been the composition of my party? It would have consisted of men who had just admitted the necessity of obeying the order exhibited by Prince Joseph to the council. They would have infallibly abandoned me; the more so, as they clearly saw that the Emperor's order had only been given upon the remonstrances and repeated entreaties of the minister of war.

Admitting for a moment the supposition that I should have set in motion the class of people commonly called the men of the republic, what were the means at my command for checking any disorderly conduct? Such a party, therefore, would have been at least as dangerous to the Emperor as his foreign enemies. Having no previous instructions by which to direct my conduct, I incurred the risk of falling a victim to that party as soon as it should have been formed. What would not have been said had matters taken this turn, as might indeed have been the case? I should have been covered with ridicule; for the allies, who only aimed at the Emperor's downfall, might easily have come to an understanding with a party to whom they would have dictated whatever terms they thought proper, not excepting the surrender of the Empress and her son into their hands. They would no sooner have treated upon a counteracting basis, than they would have immediately obtained the ascendancy; and by promising to spare the capital, they would have secured the acceptance of all their proposals. A consideration of the times and of the then existing circumstances cannot fail to add weight to these remarks.

The experience I had acquired of mankind had sufficiently satisfied me of the correctness of that opinion, to prevent my placing any reliance upon the outward demonstrations displayed by those who had not a spark of that courage which the course they proposed to me would necessarily call for.

I accordingly determined to obey, and follow the opinion given by the council. From that moment I no longer considered myself in any other capacity than as vested with the duty of maintaining the public tranquillity.

On quitting the palace of the Tuileries, M. de Talleyrand came up and addressed me in these words—"Well," said he, "thus ends all this business. Are you not also of the opinion of the council? It must be owned we are losing the game with fine cards in our hands. Such is the consequence of the folly of some ignorant men who persevere in exercising from day

to day a fatal influence. The Emperor is really much to be pitied; and yet this will not be the case, for he is very unreasonable in so obstinately confiding in the people who beset him: it is a mere act of weakness, which is quite unaccountable in such a man. Consider, sir, what a downfall for the pages of history to record! He should have given his name to the age he lives in, instead of which it will only stand conspicuous in the catalogue of adventurers! I am deeply mortified at the bare idea. What course are we now to adopt? It is not the duty of every one to remain under this edifice now crumbling to ruins: however, we shall see what will happen. The Emperor would have done much better to spare me his insults, and to form a more correct estimate of those who instilled prejudices into his mind. He would have discovered that such friends as the latter are much more to be dreaded than open enemies. What would he have said of any one else who might have involved himself in the like difficulties?"

He added many other observations, which were but a repetition of the former ones, and we parted.*

There was hardly a member of the council who, on quitting the Tuileries, did not take an affectionate leave of his companion, so well satisfied was every one that the meeting just broken up was the last act of the government with which they were connected.

* I dispatched a courier to the Emperor on retiring from the council, and detailed in my letter all that had taken place, and the consequences which I foresaw could not be delayed for two days longer. I sent four copies of my letter, one after the other, on the same day, having long adopted the practice of resorting to the methods in use for carrying on a secret correspondence, in order to guard my letters against the casualties incidental to a state of war: this precaution fully answered my object.

EXPLANATORY DOCUMENTS.

LETTER FROM M. DE METTERNICH TO M. DE BASSANO.

Prague, 22nd July, 1813.

Monsieur le Duc,

The Count de Narbonne has made me acquainted with the contents of your Excellency's dispatch to him, bearing date the 19th of this month, as well as with the documents annexed to it, relating to the discussions that have taken place at Neumarck on the subject of the armistice.

I have communicated to the Emperor the circumstance of the fresh delay which the Duke of Vicenza's arrival experiences. His Imperial Majesty commands me to address your Excellency direct; and to request you will state to his Majesty the Emperor of the French, the painful impression which that delay has made upon him.

It is not only out of a desire for peace that the Emperor has offered his mediation to the belligerent powers; he has been also impelled to this course by the necessity of putting a stop, as soon as possible, to the burdens which will often be more oppressive to nations than a war, during that intermediate state which can neither be called peace nor war.

His Imperial Majesty has not demanded the prolongation of the armistice of Pleisswitz. Nevertheless, he has not hesitated to use his good offices for the purpose of obtaining from the allied powers a farther term of twenty days, in addition to the understood period of the negotiation; which, considering the distances of the respective head-quarters, and the communications necessary for procuring the consent of those powers to the extension of the armistice, could scarcely have been opened before the 12th of July.

We transmitted to the allied powers the engagement entered into by his Majesty the Emperor of the French towards the mediating power, by article 4. of the convention of the 30th of June last, not to denounce the existing armistice before the 10th of August. Their Majesties the Emperor of all the Russias and the King of Prussia acceded to the proposal of Austria; and we lost no time in

communicating to his Majesty the Emperor of the French the official information of their formal engagement on the subject. What more obstacles could exist to prevent the belligerent powers from entering into a negotiation at Prague ? By what other means of a more legal character could the engagement of France, and the counter-engagement of the allies, not to denounce the armistice before the 10th of August, be made more binding on either side ? What farther assurances could France desire to have respecting the determination of the allied powers? What better guarantee, in short, could she receive of an unreserved and reciprocal sincerity until the expiration of the period agreed upon ?

Orders were nevertheless transmitted to the French head-quarters and to the commissioners at Neumarck. A fresh discussion thus sprung up, in spite of the most formal guarantees. This circumstance was calculated to occasion astonishment; but we were far from suspecting that it would create delay in a time so precious to the cause of peace. How was it possible to foresee the possibility that the plenipotentiaries of the mediating power, and of the allied powers, who were at Prague ever since the 12th of July, the day agreed upon for the arrival of the plenipotentiaries of both parties, would be there on the 22nd of the month, not only without the French plenipotentiary having made his appearance, but without their having the least knowledge of the period of his arrival ?

A letter just addressed to me by Baron d'Anstett, leaves me no doubt that the misunderstanding which had arisen at Neumarck between the commissioners was about to be cleared up at that place. Nevertheless, ten precious days are lost for the negotiations at Prague. This delay cannot be ascribed to the mediating power, which had fulfilled, to the greatest extent, the engagements it had contracted towards France ; nor imputed to the allies, who have accepted, in a diplomatic form, the extension of the armistice, and whose negotiators have arrived here on the appointed day.

The meeting of all the plenipotentiaries would no doubt have been sufficient to prevent any discussions from taking place elsewhere upon questions already decided between the respective cabinets.

I have only farther to request your Excellency will inform me, as soon as possible, of the time when the French plenipotentiaries will arrive in this place, it being the anxious wish of his Imperial Majesty that no fresh occurrence should serve as a motive for an irreparable loss of time.

I request your Excellency, &c.

(Signed) METTERNICH.

THE DUKE OF BASSANO'S REPLY.

Monsieur le Comte,

General Bubna has just delivered to me your Excellency's letter of the 22nd of this month. Having sent on the same day to M. de Narbonne his powers and instructions, I had complied beforehand with the request contained in the letter you did me the honour to address to me. The object of that letter being thus removed, I have not been under the neccssity of laying it before his Majesty.

With respect to the details in which you have thought proper to enter, allow me, by way of reply, Monsieur le Comte, to recall the facts to your Excellency's rccollection in the subjoined memorandum.

I havc the honour, &c.

(Signed) Duke of Bassano.

Dresden, the 24th July, 1813, at night.

1813.

30th June—Convention, which fixes upon the 5th of July as the day of the meeting of the plenipotentiaries, and which prolongs the armistice to the 10th of August.

3rd July—Letter from Count de Metternich. His Excellency proposes that the mecting should only be fixed for the 8th.

8th do.—Letter from the same. His Excellency proposes that it should be put off to the 12th.

9th do.—Departure of Count de Narbonne to urge replies upon every point agreed upon with Count de Metternich.

Same day—Letter from the Duke of Bassano to Count de Metternich. He announces the step taken at Neumarck.

12th do.—Letter from Count de Metternich. He gives notice of the appointment of the Russian and Prussian plenipotentiaries, and of their arrival at Prague.

Same day—Letter from thc same to General Bubna. He notices with pleasure the order given at Neumarck.

15th do.—Transmission of the declaration of thc Russian and Prussian ministers respecting the prolongation of thc armisticc.

16th do.—Letter from the Duke of Bassano announcing to Count de Metternich the appointment of the Duke of Vicenza and of Count de Narbonne as French plenipotentiaries.

17th do.—Correspondence of Neumarck. The Russian and Prussian commissioners will only consent to the prolongation of the armistice until the 4th of August.

19th do.—A letter transmitting those documents to Count de Narbonne in order that they may be communicated to Count de Metternich.

22nd do.—Correspondence of Neumarck. The Russian and Prussian commissioners announce that they are authorised to agree to the prolongation of the armistice on the terms of the convention of the 30th June. They raise difficulties on the subject of the mission of French officers to the governors of fortresses, and respecting the quantity of provisions to be fixed upon for the supply of those places.

Same day.—Transmission of powers and instructions to Count de Narbonne.

23rd do.—Transmission to Count de Narbonne of the correspondence of Neumarck, and of the instructions from the Prince of Neufchatel for the purpose of removing the remaining difficulties.

25th do.—The arrangements entered into at Neumarck supposed to have been signed this day.

26th do.—Departure of the Duke of Vicenza for Prague, in consequence of the conclusion of the said arrangements.

NOTE FROM M. DE METTERNICH TO THE FRENCH PLENIPOTENTIARIES.

The undersigned minister of state and of foreign affairs of his Imperial, Royal, and Apostolic Majesty, being anxious for the opening within the shortest delay of the negotiations which, between the present time and the period so near at hand of the expiration of the armistice, are to lead to the pacification of the belligerent powers, has the honour to address their Excellencies the Duke of Vicenza and the Count de Narbonne, plenipotentiaries of his Majesty the Emperor of the French, King of Italy, and to request they will concert with him the form to be adopted in the negotiations.

There exist but two methods, either by conferences or by proceedings in writing. The first, in which the negotiators meet at regulated sittings, occasions unnecessary delay in coming to a conclusion owing to the embarrassments of etiquette, the unavoidable length of verbal discussions, the drawing up and comparing of minutes, and many other difficulties. All these inconveniences are avoided by the second course, which was adopted at the congress of Teschen, and by which each of the belligerent Courts addresses his plans and proposals in the form of notes to the plenipotentiary of the mediating power, who communicates them to the adverse party, and transmits the reply to those plans and proposals, in the same manner and form. The annexed extract will show to their Excellencies the Duke of Vicenza and the Count de Narbonne the course pursued on that occasion.

Without pretending to prejudge the instructions which their Excellencies the plenipotentiaries of France may have received on a subject to which Austria has already called the attention of their Court, the undersigned has the honour to propose this mode from the double motive of the above-mentioned advantage to be derived from it, and the shortness of the time determined upon for the duration of the negotiations. The mediating power is more particularly inclined to prefer this short method, from considering that the present high negotiating powers are the same, whose plenipotentiaries had met for the congress of Teschen ; and he anticipates with pleasure, from the happy issue of the transactions of that period, a pledge of the satisfactory result of those about to commence.

The undersigned anxiously avails himself of this first opportunity to present to their Excellencies the Duke of Vicenza and the Count de Narbonne the assurances of his high consideratton.

(Signed) COUNT DE METTERNICH.

Prague, the 29th of July, 1813.

To their Excellencies the Duke of Vicenza and the Count de Narbonne, Plenipotentiaries of France.

NOTE FROM THE FRENCH PLENIPOTENTIARIES TO M. DE METTERNICH.

The undersigned, plenipotentiaries of His Majesty the Emperor and King, have the honour of replying to the note delivered to them by his Excellency the Count de Metternich, minister of state for foreign affairs to his Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Austria, plenipotentiary of the mediating power.

The convention of the 30th of June, by which France accepts the mediation of Austria, was signed after the two following points had been agreed on :—

1st. That the mediator should act with impartiality: that he neither had concluded nor would conclude any convention, even an eventual one, with a belligerent power, so long as the negotiations were pending.

2ndly. That the mediator should not present himself in the character of an umpire, but as a conciliator to clear up misunderstandings, and bring both parties together.

The form of the negotiations was also the subject of an explanation between the Count de Metternich and the Duke of Bassano. It was thought proper to come to a previous understanding on the subject, because since the negotiation of the armistice of the 4th of June, Russia had manifested her intentions, and given to understand that she was desirous of opening negotiations, not with a view to a peace, but in order to compromise Austria, and to extend the evils of war. The form of the conferences was agreed upon.

The undersigned cannot but express their surprise and regret that notwithstanding their having been several days in Prague, they have not yet seen the Russian and Prussian ministers, and that the conferences have not yet been opened by the exchange of the respective powers; that a precious time, in short, has been consumed in discussing questions as unexpected as they are incompatible with the object of the meeting of a congress, since their tendency goes to establish that the plenipotentiaries are to negotiate without knowing, seeing, or conferring with each other.

The question laid down by the plenipotentiary of the mediating power in his note of the 29th of July, when he invites the undersigned to concert with him the means to be adopted for the negotiation, whether by conferences or by proceedings in writing, has been already determined by the explanations which accompanied the convocation of the 30th of June.

Being, nevertheless, desirous, as far as it depends upon them, to remove every difficulty and conciliate all pretensions, however ill founded they may be, the undersigned propose to the plenipotentiary of the mediator, that neither the one nor the other mode of negotiating be excluded, and that both be jointly adopted.

The negotiation would accordingly proceed in regular conferences, which would take place once or twice a day, either by notes handed in at the sittings, or by verbal explanations, which might or might not be inserted in the protocol, according as it might suit the convenience of the respective plenipotentiaries. By this means the custom adopted at all times would be adhered to; and if the Russian plenipotentiary persisted in his determination to negotiate without uttering a word, he would be at liberty to do so, and might communicate by notes the intentions of his Court.

The undersigned trust that their proposal will remove every difficulty, and that the conferences will be opened without farther delay.

(Signed) Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza.
L. Narbonne.

Prague, the 6th of August, 1813.

REPLY OF THE FRENCH PLENIPOTENTIARIES.

The undersigned plenipotentiaries of his Majesty the Emperor of the French have received, with the two notes which his Excellency Count de Metternich, minister of state and of foreign affairs, plenipotentiary of the mediating power, did them the honour to address to them yesterday, the copies of the notes of the Russian and Prussian plenipotentiaries. Impressed with the sacred obligation imposed upon them by the very nature of their mission, that of avoiding any discussion which might not have for its object to realise the dearest hopes of nations, the undersigned will only consider, in the notes handed to them, those points which have a direct reference to the work of pacification. They will also abstain from laying any stress upon their desire for peace; because, however natural the pride of such sentiments, nevertheless they only regulate the spirit of the negotiations, but not the progress of affairs, which must be treated according to custom in their proper order, and each difficulty removed on its occurrence.

The undersigned, therefore, have seen with no less surprise than regret, that those notes were intended to reject a proposal which to them had appeared what it is in reality, the only one likely to conciliate the difference of opinion which has arisen respecting the form of carrying on the negotiations.

In this state of things they address themselves with confidence to the mediator; and represent to him what he cannot but acknowledge, that the only overture which has actually had the tendency to open the negotiations has proceeded from them. In fact, since the misunderstandings of the two parties left the question undecided, and the opinion of the mediator, whatever weight is due to his wisdom and penetration, was insufficient to settle it; the undersigned, as much out of deference to the mediator as from a wish to remove every difficulty, have consented to adopt altogether the mode proposed by him, and simply asked that their proposal might likewise be admitted.

This was therefore a first step gained: for it would be unjust not to consider any thing as such in a negotiation, except the absolute sacrifice by one party of its pretensions. They have a right to expect that after such a step on their part, taken in the form desired by the mediator, he would determine at last to support the motives equally founded in reason and in custom, upon which they have rested their proposal in the frequent official conferences they have held with the Count de Metternich on the subject. They nevertheless perceive that the allied plenipotentiaries, without combating that proposal, or replying to the considerations which have dictated it, without even alledging any other reason than their mere will, persist in their pretension; and require that the plenipotentiary of the mediating Court should adopt their view, though he cannot disguise from himself the fact that the solitary motive he has urged for justifying that preference rests no longer upon any foundation, since the undersigned have admitted the form which he proposed.

All the objections that can be raised against the mode they have pointed out in their note of the 6th instant fall to the ground, if it be borne in mind that it conciliates every pretension, combines all the advantages of the different forms, the authenticity of a negotiation in writing, and the promptness and facility of a verbal one.

It would be superfluous to correct the strange assertion that such a mode is unusual, since the most simple investigation of facts is enough to destroy that assertion. Every one is aware that in the principal congresses noticed in history,—in those where, as in the present case, interests were to be debated of a complicated and varied nature, at Munster, Nimeguen, Ryswick,—this double form has always been resorted to. To reject it now is an evident proof that the pacific object so carefully displayed is not the actuating motive. Great stress is laid upon the precedent of Teschen, and upon taking as a rule what formed an exception to it, and invoking in support of it the result of that negotiation, as if those which have been just quoted had not in like manner regulated the interests of sovereigns, and secured the repose of nations. It is again asked, what may be the motive which has caused a preference to be given to a form followed in a solitary case where one question only was to be the subject of discussion, and when the bases had even been previously laid down?

It is easy to judge from the present state of the question in what quarter rests the blame of the delays which have interfered with the progress of the negotiation; whether with those who, raising a pretension opposed to the received customs, reject an offer which secures to them all the advantages they lay claim to; or those who, having on their side the precedent of acknowledged custom, consent to the full adoption of the form chosen by the adverse party, and merely wish that no exclusion should be given to a mode of treating which, notwithstanding every allegation to the contrary, can alone be productive of a speedy result.

The undersigned trust that these considerations will have the more weight with his Excellency Count de Metternich, as it cannot have escaped him, that if the exclusive form of negotiations in writing offers more advantages, the notes which he has communicated to the undersigned do not afford proof that one of those advantages is to conciliate differences of opinion. He will, no doubt, also discover that the proposals of the undersigned have afforded, on the contrary, a fresh proof of their constant desire to remove every difficulty for the attainment of peace, even when their adversaries appear to have renounced that object. They renew, therefore, the proposal they have invariably made of exchanging their full powers, in order to open the negotiations without farther delay, agreeably to the form proposed by the mediating power, without excluding, however, the form of conferences, in order to preserve the advantage of oral explanations.

The undersigned have the honour, &c.

(Signed) Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza.
L. Narbonne.

Prague, the 9th August, 1813.

AUSTRIAN DECLARATION OF WAR.

The undersigned, minister of state and of foreign affairs, is instructed, by an express order from his august master, to make the following declaration to his Excellency the Count de Narbonne, ambassador of his Majesty the Emperor of the French, King of Italy.

Ever since the last peace signed with France, in October, 1809, his Imperial, Royal, and Apostolic Majesty has devoted his most earnest attention, not only to establish those confidential and friendly relations which he had adopted as the basis of his political system, but to make those relations concur to the maintenance of peace and order in Europe. He trusted that this intimate intercourse, cemented by a family alliance contracted with his Majesty the Emperor of the French, would contribute to give him over the political conduct of the latter the only influence which he felt jealous of acquiring; such an influence as tends to impart to the Cabinets of Europe the spirit of moderation, the respect for the rights and possessions of independent states, by which he is himself animated.

His Imperial Majesty was not long allowed to indulge in such pleasing hopes. A year had scarcely elapsed since the period which appeared to have raised the military glory of the Sovereign of France to the highest pitch; and nothing appeared wanting to his prosperity, in as far as it depended upon his external attitude and influence, when fresh annexations to the French territory of states hitherto independent, fresh partitions and dismemberings of the German empire * came to awaken the alarms of European powers, and prepare, by their fatal reaction upon the north of Europe, the war which was to be rekindled between France and Russia in 1812.†

OBSERVATIONS DICTATED BY NAPOLEON.

* Austria has of her own accord renounced her claim to the German empire. She has acknowledged the princes of the confederation, and admitted the protectorship of the Emperor. If the Austrian cabinet has conceived the plan of re-establishing the German empire, of canvassing every thing that victory has established and treaties have consecrated, it has entertained a project which affords no proof of *the spirit of moderation and the respect for the rights of independent states* with which it professes to be animated.

† The Cabinet of Vienna throws into oblivion the treaty of alliance which it concluded on the 14th March, 1812. It forgets that by that treaty France and Austria have reciprocally guarantied to each other the integrity of their present territories. It forgets that by that treaty Austria has bound herself to de-

The French Cabinet is more sensible than any other how much his Imperial Majesty had at heart to prevent its breaking out by all the means which were dictated to him by the interest he felt in the welfare of both powers, as well as those which would necessarily be involved in the mighty struggle about to take place. His Imperial Majesty is not apprehensive that Europe will ever accuse him of being the author of the incalculable evils which were the consequences of that war.*

In this state of things his Majesty the Emperor, feeling unable to preserve to his people the benefit of peace, or to maintain a successful neutrality in the midst of the vast field of battle which surrounded his dominions on all sides, only consulted, in the course which he adopted, his fidelity to amicable relations so re-

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fend the territory of France, such as it then existed, and which has not since received any extension. It forgets that, on the 14th of March, 1812, all the questions which were to bring on the war were known and laid down; and that it took a part against Russia of its own free-will, and with a knowledge of facts. If it entertained at that time the sentiments which it now manifests, why did it not then make a common cause with Russia? Why, at least, did it not adopt a system of neutrality, instead of joining what it now calls an unjust cause? Prussia entered at the same time into an alliance with France, which she has since violated; but her fortresses and her territory were then occupied. That country being placed between two great powers in arms, and being the theatre of war, a system of neutrality was out of the question. She took the part of the strongest, when Russia afterwards occupied her territory; she obeyed the will of Russia, and became her ally. None of those circumstances, which regulated the conduct of Prussia, had existed in the case of Austria in the year 1812, nor do they exist in 1813. She espoused, in 1812, that which appeared to her the best cause; that cause, the triumph of which was of more importance to her views and to the interests of Europe, which she now professes the desire to take under her generous protection. She had shed her blood to support France; in 1813 she is ready to shed it in support of the opposite side. What must nations think of such conduct? What judgment will they not pass upon a government, which attacking today what it defended yesterday, plainly shows that neither justice nor policy regulate the most important decisions of her Cabinet.

* The French Cabinet is more sensible than any other that Austria offered her alliance at a moment when there did not exist the slightest hope of obtaining it. It knows that if any thing could have induced it to embark in the war, it was the certainty not only that Austria would not take part against it, but that she would, on the contrary, take part in its favour. That Cabinet also knows that, far from disapproving of that war, Austria has encouraged it; far from apprehending, she has desired it; far from pretending to oppose fresh partitions of states, she meditated others with the intention of profiting by them.

cently established, and the hope he still wished to indulge in, that his alliance with France, by affording him surer means of claiming attention to the counsels of wisdom, would put some limit to unavoidable evils, and promote the cause of the return of peace to Europe. *

This has not unfortunately been the case. Neither the brilliant successes of the campaign of 1812, nor the unexampled disasters which marked the conclusion of it, could restore to the councils of the French government that spirit of moderation which might have turned the former to a useful account, and diminished the effect of the latter. †

Nevertheless, his Majesty took advantage of the moment when the state of exhaustion on both sides had caused the active operations of the war to slacken, in order to convey a language of peace to the belligerent powers, which he still hoped would be received by both parties with that sincerity which dictated it.

Persuaded, however, that he could not insure attention, unless he supported that language by forces which would promise to that party, with whom his Majesty's views and principles should be found to coincide, the support of his active co-operation to bring the mighty struggle to a close; ‡ His Imperial Majesty, in

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* The Cabinet of Vienna pretends that it could not maintain a successful neutrality in the midst of the vast field of battle which surrounded Austria on all sides. Were not circumstances the same as in 1806? Were not sanguinary battles fought in 1806 and 1807 near the frontiers of her territory? and did she not preserve to her people the benefit of peace, and maintain a successful neutrality? But the government of Austria, in deciding for war, in fighting for the cause of France, *consulted*, as it alleges, *its fidelity to amicable relations recently established:* a fidelity which no longer deserves to be consulted when those relations have grown older by a twelvemonth, and more contracted by a formal alliance. If that government is now to be believed, it was not to secure to itself certain territorial aggrandisements that it formed an alliance with France in 1812, guarantied to her all her possessions, and took part in the war. It was to promote the cause of the return of peace, and to claim attention to the counsels of wisdom. What logic! what modesty!

† How did the Cabinet of Vienna learn that the brilliant successes of the campaign of 1812 did not restore moderation to the councils of the French government? Had it been correctly informed, it would have learnt that the councils of France, after the battle of the Moskwa, were of a moderate and pacific character, and that every means were then resorted to which were calculated to restore peace.

‡ The Cabinet of Vienna perseveres in its inconsistencies. It made common cause with France in 1812, and now pretends that this was with the view of preventing her making war upon Russia. It arms in 1813 in favour of Prussia and Russia, in order, as it says, to inspire them with a desire for peace. Those powers,

tendering his mediation to the contending powers, adopted the determination, so painful to his heart, of appealing to the courage and patriotism of his subjects. The congress proposed by him, and accepted by both parties, assembled in the midst of military preparations, which the success of the negotiations would render wholly unnecessary, if the wishes of the Emperor should be realised; but which, in the contrary case, would lead, by renewed efforts, to the pacific result which his Imperial Majesty would have preferred to secure without any effusion of blood. *

By obtaining from the confidence they had unequivocally placed in his Imperial Majesty the consent of the powers to a prolongation of the armistice which France deemed to be necessary for the object of the negotiations, the Emperor saw in this testimony of their pacific views a proof of the moderation of their principles and intentions. †

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at first animated by successes which they owed to the chance of fortuitous circumstances, had been restored to calmer sentiments by the signal reverses of the first month of the campaign; being weakened and defeated, they were about to recover from their illusions. The Austrian government declares to them that it arms in their favour; it exhibits to their view her armies ready to take their defence; and by presenting them with fresh Chances in a continuation of the war, it pretends to inspire them with a desire for peace! What would it have done, had its object been to encourage them to a war? It has offered to Russia to take the burden upon itself; to Prussia, to change the theatre of the war; and has called to its own territory the troops of its allies, and all the calamities which fell upon Prussia. It has offered, in short, to the Cabinet of St. Petersburg the most agreeable spectacle for an Emperor of Russia; Austria, her natural enemy, fighting against France, her present enemy. If the Cabinet of Vienna had invoked the councils of wisdom, it would have learned that a fire is not got under by feeding it; that it is unwise to rush into war in behalf of a people, whose interests are either adverse or foreign to its own; that there is folly, in short, in exposing to all the chances of war a nation which after such prolonged misfortunes might have continued to enjoy the blessings of peace. Ambition, however, rejects the counsels of wisdom.

* The author of this declaration still keeps within the vicious circle in which he has involved himself. Russia and Prussia were fully aware that the Austrian government was arming against France. From that moment they could no longer feel a desire for peace. This result of the intentions of the Cabinet of Vienna was too evident not to have been calculated upon by that cabinet.

† The Cabinet of Vienna had occasioned the loss of the whole month of June by not fulfilling any of the formalities which ought to have preceded the opening of the congress. France did not ask that the armistice should be prolonged, though she gave her consent to it. What she actually wished, and demanded, was that the negotiations should be understood to continue whilst hostilities should be

He found them to be in accordance with his own sentiments, and felt persuaded that from those powers alone he would meet a sincere disposition to concur in the restoration of a solid and permanent peace. France, so far from manifesting corresponding intentions, had given nothing more than general assurances, too often at variance with public declarations, which afforded no foundation for the hope that she would contribute towards the attainment of peace those sacrifices which might have the effect of restoring it to Europe. *

The march of the congress could leave no doubt on the subject; the delay in the arrival of the French plenipotentiaries, under pretences which the great object in view should have caused to be laid aside; † the question of the inadequacy of their instructions on matters of form, which occasioned the loss of an invaluable time, when there only remained a few days for effecting the most important negotiations; ‡ all these circumstances combined, afforded too clear a

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going on. But the Cabinet of Vienna refused its consent. Austria would have been bound down as a mediator during the negotiations. She preferred a prolongation of the armistice, which afforded her time to complete her armaments; and the limited duration of which presented her with a fatal period for breaking off the negotiations, and declaring herself.

* How did the Cabinet of Vienna satisfy itself *that France would not contribute towards the attainment of peace those sacrifices which might have the effect of restoring it to Europe?* Previously to the moment which it had fixed upon for the war again breaking out, did it propose an *ultimatum*, and make its wishes known? It has declared war because it wished only for war. It has declared it without inquiring whether it might be avoided, and with a precipitancy in which it is difficult to discover the influence of the counsels of wisdom.

† It is owing to Austria and the allies that the arrival of the plenipotentiaries has been delayed. Nevertheless, certain difficulties purposely raised had not yet been removed when Count de Narbonne was already in Prague. His powers, which were shared in common by both plenipotentiaries, authorised him to act separately or in concert. The Duke of Vicenza arrived at a later period, because the enemy raised fresh difficulties, in which the dignity of France was compromised. To what purpose, however, are these observations? Of what consequence could have been the delay of a few days for a mediator who had not wished for war? and what a strange motive for war is a delay of a few days!

‡ The plenipotentiaries were instructed to adhere to all the forms of negotiation established by usage. The mediator proposed unusual forms, which tended to obstruct all intercourse between the plenipotentiaries, all negotiation. He introduced a discussion which, had he, the mediator, felt a sincere desire for peace, he never would have started. *There only remained,* he says, *a few days for effecting the most important negotiation.* Why were there but a few days? What had the negotiation in common with the armistice? Could not negotia-

demonstration that peace, such as it was desired by Austria and the allied sovereigns, was foreign to the wishes of France;* and that having accepted the proposal of a negotiation for the sake of form, and to avoid the risk of being exposed to the reproaches of having caused the prolongation of the war, she was anxious to elude its effects;† or perhaps to take advantage of it, for the purpose only of

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tions continue with the war? Of what consequence are a few days more or less when peace is in question? If the Cabinet of Vienna pretended not to negotiate, but to dictate it, as conditions are dictated to a besieged town, a few days were no doubt sufficient. But, in that case, why did it not even propose a capitulation? *There only remained a few days for effecting the most important negotiation.* Was ever any negotiation effected in a few days? Time is of all elements the most necessary when the question is to understand each other. Time is, on the other hand, the most useless of elements for a mediator who has already formed his determination. Nevertheless, as the question is of declaring against France, such a determination is not of so trifling a nature as to make it a matter of indifference whether a few days more or less are employed in weighing it.

* We must do justice to the penetration of the Cabinet of Vienna. No doubt that peace, such as it was desired by the allied sovereigns, must necessarily be foreign to the wishes of France; just as peace, such as it was desired by France, could not but be foreign to the wishes of the allies. Every power that enters into a negotiation desires every thing it can obtain. When a mediator is appointed, he interposes between contending wills, in order to reconcile them. Such is his mission: his glory consists in succeeding in it. Such, however, was not the part which the Austrian Cabinet had assigned to itself. It never has been a mediator. It has assumed the character of an enemy from the moment when, by its own acknowledgment, it desired no other peace than what suited the wishes of one of the parties. What, however, was that peace which the Cabinet of Vienna desired? If it really wished for peace, a peace of any kind, why not have explained itself? Why, because it had adopted all the pretensions of Russia, Prussia, and England. Because it had, moreover, its own pretensions, which it was unwilling to yield; because, in short, it had determined upon war.

† France proposed the opening of a congress, because she sincerely desired peace; because she trusted that her plenipotentiaries, when brought into contact with those of Russia and Prussia, would succeed in coming to a right understanding with them; because a congress, even under the mediation of Austria, was a means of escaping the danger of the insinuations which the Cabinet of Vienna was throwing out.

France accepted the mediation of Austria because, even supposing the Cabinet of Vienna to have those ambitious views respecting which we did not entertain any doubt, it was to be expected that the part of mediator would operate as a restraint upon that cabinet, and that it would not dare, in a public negotiation, and for the

separating Austria from the powers which were already united to her in principle, before the treaties had consecrated their union for the cause of peace, and of the happiness of the world. *

Austria withdraws herself from this negotiation, the result of which has disappointed her dearest expectations, with self-confidence in the good faith she brought to it. More anxious than ever for the success of the noble object she had proposed to herself, she only takes up arms for the attainment of it, in concert with those powers who are animated with the same sentiments. Fully disposed at all times to assist in the re-establishment of an order of things, which by a wise division of forces places the guarantee of peace under the shield of an association of independent states, she will neglect no opportunity of obtaining that result; and the knowledge she has acquired of the dispositions of those Courts which are henceforward her allies, afford her the assurance that they will sincerely co-operate with her towards so salutary an object. †

In announcing to the Count de Narbonne, by the Emperor's order, that his functions of ambassador cease from this moment, the undersigned places at

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sake of its own interests, to reject our moderate views, and the sacrifices we were disposed to make for the attainment of peace; because, in short, had it been otherwise, and had the mediator and our enemies agreed upon their mutual pretensions, the cabinet of Vienna would propose an *ultimatum*, which would rouse the indignation of France and her allies.

* *Austria was*, therefore, *already united in principle with the enemies of France!* Who requested of her this avowal?

The Cabinet of Vienna was apprehensive that France would take advantage of the negotiation to separate Austria from the hostile powers! No doubt if Austria had joined them to prevent their making peace, and with the firm determination of waging war against us, she had reason to dread a negotiation in which our moderation might offer them more advantageous chances of success by concluding a peace than by resorting to war. But why then did the Cabinet of Vienna offer its mediation, and trumpet forth to Europe its anxiety to bring about a peace?

† Austria is desirous *of establishing an order of things, which, by a wise division of forces, places the guarantee of peace under the shield of an association of independent states.* She will only make peace when an equal division of forces shall guaranty the independence of each state. To succeed in this object, she must, in the first place, aggrandise Bavaria and Saxony at her expense; for the higher powers must descend from their elevation, in order that lesser ones may become their equals. When she shall have given the example, she will then have a right to claim that her example be followed. The Cabinet of Vienna wishes, therefore, to engage in a war for the purpose of forming out of all the powers a republic of sovereigns, the elements of which will be of a uniform nature. And is it pre-

his Excellency's disposal the passports he will require for himself and his suite.

Similar passports will be delivered to M. de la Blanche, the French chargé-d'affaires at Vienna, as well as to the other individuals composing the embassy.

He has the honour to present, &c.

(Signed) METTERNICH.

Prague, the 12th of August, 1813.

LAST NOTE FROM M. DE BASSANO TO M. DE METTERNICH.

The undersigned, minister of foreign affairs, has submitted to his Majesty the Emperor and King the declaration of the 11th of August, by which Austria lays down the part of a mediator, under which she had concealed her real intentions.

Ever since the month of February, the hostile views of the Cabinet of Vienna towards France were known to all Europe. Denmark, Saxony, Bavaria, Wirtemburg, Naples, and Westphalia, have documents in their archives which prove the spirit of jealousy which Austria was fomenting against France, under the false appearances of the interest it felt for its ally, and of its anxiety to bring about a peace. The undersigned abstains from portraying the system of protestations lavished on the one side, and of insinuations thrown out on the other, by which the Cabinet of Vienna was compromising the dignity of its sovereign, and which in its development has trifled with what is held most sacred amongst men, with the character of a mediator and of a congress, and with the very name of peace.

If Austria wished to make war, why assume a false language, and surround France with snares of so glaring a nature as to be visible to all?

If the mediator desired peace, would he have insisted that such complicated transactions should be settled in the space of fifteen or twenty days? What indication was there of a pacific disposition in dictating peace to France within a shorter time than is necessary to conclude the capitulation of a besieged town? The peace of Teschen required a negotiation of upwards of four months. More than six weeks were consumed at Sistow before the discussion, even upon matters of form, could be brought to a close. The negotiation of the peace of Vienna, in 1809, when the greater part of the Austrian monarchy was in the power of France, lasted a period of two months.

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tended to sacrifice the repose of the world to such idle dreams! Is it possible to trifle so openly with the understanding and the opinion of Europe? Neither in drawing up manifestoes, nor in regulating its conduct, has the Cabinet of Vienna *listened to the counsels of wisdom.*

In these several transactions, the interests and the number of the parties were circumscribed in their extent. But when at Prague the question was to lay down in a congress the basis of a general peace, to conciliate the interests of France, Austria, Russia, Prussia, Denmark, Saxony, and so many other powers; when to the complication arising out of the multiplicity and varied character of the respective interests, were superadded the difficulties resulting from the avowed as well as the concealed pretensions of the mediator, it was absurd to insist that every thing should be terminated, without fail, within a fortnight. Had it not been for the fatal intervention of Austria, peace would at this moment have been agreed upon between Russia, France, and Prussia.

Hostile to France, and covering her ambition under the mask of mediation, Austria complicated every thing, and rendered all conciliation impossible. But Austria having declared herself in a state of war, has assumed a more candid position; one which removes all doubt and obscurity. Europe has, therefore, a nearer chance of enjoying peace; there exists one ground of complication less than heretofore.

The undersigned is accordingly directed to propose to Austria that she should from this moment prepare the means of attaining peace, and open a congress which all the powers, great and small, shall be called upon to attend, where every question shall be solemnly laid down, where it will not be required that such a work, no less delicate in its nature than salutary in its consequences, shall terminate in a week or a month; where the proceedings shall be carried on with that slowness which is inseparable from all such undertakings, with the gravity belonging to so great an object and to such important interests. The negotiations may be of long duration; but they ought to be so. Did it only require a few days to conclude the treaties of Utrecht, Nimeguen, Ryswick, or Aix-la-Chapelle?

In the greater part of the memorable discussions that have taken place, the question of peace was always kept independent of that of war: negotiations went on without its being known whether battles were or were not taking place; and since the allies build such hopes upon the chances of a battle, there is nothing to prevent negotiations from going on, now as then, sword in hand.

The undersigned proposes that a point on the frontier shall be declared to be a neutral spot, marked out for the conferences; that the plenipotentiaries of France, Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Saxony, shall meet there; that all the representatives of the belligerent powers shall be convoked; and that in so august an assembly the work of peace shall commence: a peace so ardently desired by all Europe. Nations will experience a real consolation in finding the sovereigns engaged in putting an end to the calamities of war, and confiding to upright and enlightened men the care of conciliating the interests of all nations, of compensating their sacrifices, and of rendering the peace alike advantageous and honourable to all.

The undersigned does not apply himself to answering the manifesto of Austria, and the only complaint upon which it rests. His answer would be complete in a

single word. He would quote the date of the treaty of alliance concluded between both powers on the 14th of March, 1812, and the guarantee of the territory of the empire, as it existed on the 14th of March, 1812, which is stipulated by that treaty.

The undersigned, &c.

(Signed) Duke of Bassano.

Dresden, the 18th of August, 1813.

LAST NOTE FROM M. DE METTERNICH TO M. DE BASSANO.

The undersigned, minister and secretary of state for foreign affairs, received yesterday the official note which his Excellency the Duke of Bassano did him the honour to address to him on the 18th instant.

The Austrian Cabinet does not think itself called upon, after the war has broken out between Austria and France, to refute the gratuitous attacks contained in the Duke of Bassano's note. Fully confiding in the public opinion, Austria calmly awaits the judgment of Europe and of posterity.

As the proposal of his Majesty the Emperor of the French still presents to the Emperor a glimmering of hope that a general pacification may be accomplished, his Imperial Majesty has thought it right to avail himself of it. He has accordingly directed the undersigned to make known to the Russian and Prussian Cabinets the demand of the opening of a congress which, during the war itself, might be engaged in seeking the means of accomplishing a general peace. Their Majesties the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, animated with the same sentiments as their august ally, have authorised the undersigned to declare to his Excellency the Duke de Bassano, that, *feeling unable to pronounce upon a question, the interest of which is common to all, without having previously conferred on the subject with the remainder of the allies, the three Courts will immediately make known to them the proposal of France.*

The undersigned has requested them to transmit to the French Cabinet, within the shortest possible delay, the overtures of all the allied Courts, in reply to the above-mentioned proposal.

The undersigned has the honour, &c.

(Signed) Prince de Metternich.

Prague, the 21st of August, 1813.

END OF VOL. III.

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